new perspectives for research

on juvenile delinquency

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a report of a conference on the relevance
and interrelations of certain concepts
from sociology and psychiatry for de-
linquency, held May 6 and 7, 1955

editors **Helen L. Witmer**
Ruth Kotinsky

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Throughout its nearly half century of existence, the Children's Bureau has regarded juvenile delinquency as one of its chief concerns. Under its auspices studies of the problem and of ways of dealing with it have been conducted from time to time, and the services of specialists on various aspects of the problem have been provided for consultation with State and local bodies and with private organizations. Most recently, a Division of Juvenile Delinquency Service has been set up in the Bureau, and several additional workers for research in delinquency have been added to the Bureau's research staff.

As our work has progressed, we have become increasingly dissatisfied with the apparent scarcity of verified knowledge about the causes of delinquency and about ways of helping delinquent children. It has seemed to us that the trouble may lie either in the paucity of relevant basic research or in the fact that what is known basically has not been applied or has not been well applied in work with delinquents.

On the assumption that there is more known than is being used and, particularly, that in the theories of forefront sociologists and psychologists there is much that is relevant to the delinquency problem that has not yet been explored, the conference reported in this publication was called. Its charge was to consider two sets of ideas described in the writings of Erik Erikson and Robert Merton, their possible relation to each other, and their relevance for research in delinquency.

The conference was planned and chaired by Ruth Kotinsky, and this report of the conference was prepared largely by her. Within a few months after she completed this work, Miss Kotinsky died as a result of an automobile accident—an irreparable loss to her friends, the Bureau, and workers in many professions. This conference and this report were thus her last completed public work.

This report is characteristic of Ruth Kotinsky's many contributions to mental health and education. She was always trying to arrive at general principles through some new synthesis of theories and points of view of a variety of disciplines—education, mental

health, child development, parent education. In building a bridge
between psychological and sociological theories about delinquency,
this report represents a change in orientation for delinquency research.
And it is for this reason that the report of this conference has special
urgency for workers in universities and research centers conducting
research in this or related areas.

Martha M. Eliot, M. D.
Chief, Children's Bureau.

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Research about juvenile delinquency is sparse, fragmentary, and, for the most part, highly empirical. Although it deals with the main aspects of the problem—cause, treatment, predictions and prevention of misconduct—it does so rather unsystematically and often with little regard to basic theory in the behavioral sciences. This is not wholly a fault, of course. In the exploration of any subject matter, there is a time for simple description, classification, and search for associations among variables. Sooner or later, however, research must become more sophisticated and more related to theory, and there must be a more systematic attack upon specific problems in the field of inquiry.

It is our conviction that the time has come for such a change in the orientation of research about delinquency. This is not to say that the kinds of studies so far produced should no longer be undertaken. Rather, it is to say that new kinds of studies are needed and that these new studies should be concerned with testing hunches or hypotheses that behavioral science theory suggests.

As a step in the direction of this new research orientation, the Children's Bureau called the conference, New Perspectives for Research on Juvenile Delinquency, reported in this bulletin. The two viewpoints selected for discussion at the Conference, although developed separately and out of entirely different bodies of theory, seemed to us to converge in explanation of delinquency.

It will be noted that, in choosing the juncture of these two sets of ideas—Erikson on ego identity and Merton on the social and cultural environment and *anomie*—as the subject matter for discussion by the conference participants, we were taking several steps at once toward developing a new orientation in delinquency research. First, as was said before, we were implying that research should be based on or grow out of theory. Second, we were suggesting that the separateness of psychological and sociological theories about delinquency should be diminished, or at least, that bridges should be built between

them. Third, in choosing Merton's and Erikson's theories for consideration, we were making a proposal about a particular slant that theory-based research in delinquency might take.

With so ambitious an aim for the conference, it is not surprising that the participants found much more for discussion than could be dealt with in two days. The theoretical ideas presented for consideration were complicated and abstruse, and their possible connections had never before been explored. Moreover, the panel of discussants had theories and observations of their own that bore upon the questions at hand, some of which became as much a part of the main discussion as the sets of ideas with which the conference started. Consequently, the group did not have time to propose and formulate specific research projects based on the theories presented; in fact, they did not even have time to come to definite conclusions about the bearing of Merton's and Erikson's theories on delinquency causation.

This being so, it seemed especially important to us that a rather full report of the conference discussion be published. The participants in the conference need such a record of what was said and by whom, so that they can continue their deliberations, even though in isolation from each other. Other theorists and research workers may want a record of the discussion even more. We in the Bureau, too, want to study and ponder on what was said, and we want to share it with our colleagues in universities and research centers, so that this unfinished discussion can continue and can lead to the formulation of research projects that may initiate a new line of study in the delinquency field.

Helen Witmer
Ruth Kotinsky
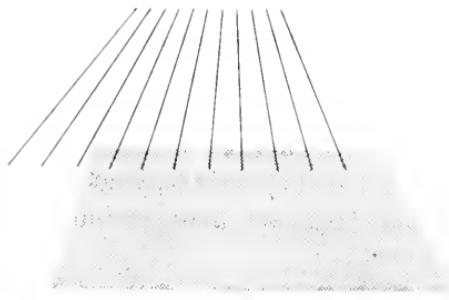
Ego Identity and the Psychosocial Moratorium

The conference opened with a statement by Elizabeth H. Ross, Deputy Chief of the Children's Bureau, describing the Bureau's longtime interest and work in the field of juvenile delinquency and its recent activities aimed at the reduction of delinquency and at the improvement of services for juvenile delinquents. The purpose of the conference, was outlined by Helen L. Witmer, after which the conference participants introduced themselves and cited briefly their professional connections with research on delinquency.[1]

With the setting of the conference established, Erik H. Erikson put before the group, for their consideration and reaction, some of his ideas about ego identity and how it develops through a series of psychosocial crises, the part the individual and the community play in the process, the function and dangers of the psychosocial moratorium which precedes the individual's commitment to an adult way of life, and the bearing of these and other matters on juvenile delinquency.

This statement was followed, at the chairman's request, by comments and questions from members of the panel, put forth for the purpose of clarification of Mr. Erikson's remarks. To these Mr. Erikson responded in a statement that closed the morning session.

Mr. ERIKSON: I have been asked to outline this morning what I mean by ego identity. According to the dictates of my field, and of my daily occupation, I shall do so primarily by dwelling on the psycho-

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[1] Mr. Merton was unavoidably absent from the first session of the conference.

pathological counterpart of ego identity, which is identity diffusion. This syndrome we can study in its extreme forms in late-adolescent "borderline cases," that is, in young people acutely and severely disturbed, but short of clear-cut psychosis. In studying them we try to understand what is specific for the crisis of youth as such, suspecting that too early psychiatric diagnoses may prejudice and limit our search.

Theoretically speaking, then, the study of identity diffusion as a crisis of youth includes that of juvenile delinquency. This I must try to make plausible to you; in this, also, I need your help. For, in this company, I am probably the one who knows least about juvenile delinquency from direct observation. But if I add that I know about juvenile delinquency only what I read in the papers, then I refer to something more systematic than it sounds. I have made it my business in the last few months (and before I knew of this conference) to read a number of papers from cities over the country and to study the reflection of this many-sided phenomenon in the publicist's mind. And there I began to tremble. For it seems that what is written about juvenile delinquency—even by well-meaning people— is one of the most malignant aspects of the phenomenon.

To warm up, let me tell you of two recent experiences. One is a meeting with a reporter for a large and journalistically conservative newspaper. He stopped me in front of a meeting hall and asked me was I not an expert on young people. I said yes, to a limited extent. He asked me to listen to a statement about juvenile delinquency and the comic books. This, incidentally, was at the time when the controversy over this matter was "hot." What he read was a not-unsound refutation of the extreme claims made at the time. But then he said, "Would you mind my quoting you as having said what I just read to you?" I said "Certainly I would mind, because I haven't said it."

"But you agree with it, don't you?"

"Yes, to some extent."

"Well, then, why shouldn't I quote you as having said it?"

"Because I didn't say it."

He looked more and more incredulous about what he obviously considered some kind of cussedness and finally asked "Well, why *do* you object?" I said something like this: I object to the habit of making "news" out of the mutual contradictions of so-called experts. The press seems less interested in conveying what the experts say, and on what evidence, than in whether or not what one expert says this week contradicts something that another expert said the week before in the newspapers. This is bad enough in other matters of public concern, but in regard to juvenile delinquency it is fatal. I think juve-

niles are especially aware of and sensitive to what is being said about them. They constantly look for, and develop by, the reflections of themselves in others. Therefore, when one publishes something about this subject, one must remember that juveniles will read it. One cannot write about them without writing for them. And if one reports nothing but adult bewilderment and self-contradiction, one represents the adult world as untrustworthy. So, in a way, one justifies juvenile delinquency.

After a while the journalist said, half apologetically, half, defiantly: "We have to send our stories in, you know. We have no time to be dedicated."

I don't have to tell you that he merely expressed for one occupation concerned with juvenile delinquency what is common to us all; namely, the (shall we say?) occupation-centered attitude toward this emergency. Each occupation is primarily thinking of how quickly can I get "the story in" in terms of my professional associations and theoretical assumptions, using juvenile delinquency to support my conceptions and to vent my prejudices. We all want to "tell them," but few of us take the time to stop and listen, to see what juvenile delinquency is telling us about ourselves, about youth, and about our times. I therefore dare to approach this vast subject only in a meeting like this which, I take it, has time.

The second experience that has preoccupied me comes out of the reports of a trial in Springfield, Mass., where, as you may recall, a high school boy murdered a babysitter and a child. At the time when this boy was first recognized as the killer (his bloody clothes had been hanging in his closet all along) he said, "It was a prank that backfired."

To my mind, this was the simplest and the most sensible thing that was reported in the papers. But it was universally dismissed as irrelevant. It did not fit any category; it wasn't a legal term, it wasn't a psychiatric term, there was no recognized psychology to back it up. A psychologist who would have tried to explain it might have been exposed to ridicule by court reporters. Thus, what the young people themselves say is often completely ignored unless they learn to say (as many do, and fast) what adults want to hear. And yet, in moments of tragic clarity, they themselves express most succinctly what otherwise only our complex theories of unconscious motivation can even begin to grasp.

I wanted to convey these two experiences to you, just to get into the mood. Maybe, also, because I wanted to indicate the hope that here we can try out a few untried hypotheses and forget for the moment about possible ways and means of preparing a report of this conference for the public. I want to feel free to talk about a few concepts concerning youth and about certain views of our times,

and let the others who are here at this meeting decide whether they are relevant.

In advance of this conference, I sent you, as a kind of general introduction, a longish paper called "The Problem of Identity." [2] It does not deal with juvenile delinquency. For this and for other reasons, I do not know whether I can assume that most of you read it. If you started to, I may have angered you by making you read autobiographical quotations from George Bernard Shaw. Yet, on second thought, you may agree that Shaw was a kind of intellectual delinquent all his life, and successfully so. At any rate, you will have found in the paper certain concepts concerning the psychosocial dynamics of "becoming somebody." These I want to apply to the problem of "becoming delinquent."

Let me quickly reintroduce these concepts without trying to explain each one fully or to give examples of its application.

First the concept of **ego identity.** It is derived from a variety of observations, clinical and otherwise. I think that it was in a longitudinal study of California children and in the reconstruction of child training in American Indian tribes that I first had to concern myself especially with that something which safeguards the continuity of an individual's psychosocial development. I called it **ego** identity because what we call ego in psychoanalysis is vitally concerned with the continuity of experience. And I called it ego **identity** because this something, at any given stage of development, represents certain essential inner identities. One of these inner identities is a consistent and more or less conscious sense of the identity of what one was as a child in a family and of what one is about to become in society. Another approximated identity is that of the conception of oneself that one has gradually created and that one perceives as one's role and reflection in others.

Through a series of crises, the individual comes to feel most himself where he means most to others—to those others who have come to mean most to him. This is obviously an intricate and lifelong process. However, it must come to a relative completion at the end of adolescence. This completion crowns childhood. If it doesn't, a transitory disturbance is created which can lead to a malignant episode or to basic defect. This we shall call acute or chronic identity diffusion.

A community's ways of identifying an individual are a different mechanism from that of the individual's ways of identifying himself with others. Mechanisms, aside, we can all remember both having experienced ourselves and having seen in others the kind of psychosocial event that takes place when suddenly everybody seems to "rec-

ognize" a young person as somebody who makes sense and gives pleasure in a certain predictable way.

It sometimes happens, however, that the young person is "recognized," at a critical moment, as one who arouses displeasure and discomfort. Then the community, or some important people in it, will more or less explicitly suggest to the young person that he change in ways that to him do not add up to anything "identical with himself." The reasons for this feeling on the young person's part, only an analysis of his unconscious identity fragments could reveal. To the community, however, the desirable change is conceived of as a matter of good will and of willpower, while resistance to change is perceived as a matter of bad will and of inferiority, hereditary or otherwise. Thus the community underestimates, at one time, to what extent a long, intricate history has restricted a youth's choices of identity formation, and at another, to what extent the community could, if it only would, still help determine a youth's destiny within these choices.

Now, a second concept: **psychosocial moratorium.** A moratorium is a period of delay, granted to somebody who is not ready to meet an obligation or forced on somebody who should give himself time to do so. Here I mean a delay of adult commitments, and yet not only a delay. I mean a period that is characterized by a selective permissiveness on the part of society and of provocative playfulness on the part of youth; and yet also a period of deep (if often transitory) commitment on the part of youth, and ceremonial acceptance of commitment on the part of society. Such moratoria show highly individual variations, which are especially pronounced in very gifted people (gifted for better or for worse); and there are, of course, institutional variations linked with the ways of life of cultures and subcultures.

As for gifted individuals, you will find, in my paper, Bernard Shaw's version of the moratorium that he created for himself. His moratorium we will agree was "for better." An example "for worse" is Hitler's extended moratorium, as described in The Young Hitler I Knew [3] by the man who was young Hitler's one and only friend for 4 years, after which time Hitler disappeared completely for 2 years.

Hitler wanted desperately to be a city planner; he walked around for days (and as if in a daze) rebuilding his home town of Linz. To rebuild, of course, he had to imagine the city destroyed, but no doubt he tried to be "constructive" on a vast, if almost delusional, scale. When he finally sent his plans for the opera house in Linz to a committee which paid no attention to them, he really broke with society. And would you believe it, in his very last days, after hav-

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[3] Kubizek, August: The Young Hitler I Knew. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1955. 298 pp.

ing destroyed Europe, having been cornered in his bunker, and having planned his self-liquidation, he put the last touches on his plans for the opera house in Linz, which he almost came to build. To such an extent does late-adolescent commitment persist in a person of very special needs and, of course, of very special and appropriate gifts.

I could string biography on biography to illustrate this point (and its countless variations) but Hitler will serve to bring us closer to our main theme. For undoubtedly, such imposition on the world of a highly personal pattern of primarily destructive intentions has criminal features. And yet it could not succeed by itself. It calls for historical conditions in the form of an ideological movement almost amounting to a national state of historical delinquency, a whole nation's dream of securing, on its own terms, a historical moratorium of one thousand years.

Each society and each culture institutionalizes a certain moratorium for the majority of its young people. For the most part, these moratoria coincide with apprenticeships and adventures that are in line with the society's values. The moratorium may be a time for horse-stealing and vision-quests, a time for **wandershaft** and argument, a time for being "lost youth" and sentimentality, a time for rituals and for pranks.

I may say in passing that our society seems to be in the process of incorporating psychiatric treatment as a possible moratorium for young people who otherwise would be crushed by standardization and mechanization. There is much of the ideology of insight and freedom of choice in this, and yet also much that must be carefully considered, especially when treatment is advocated as, say, a cure for delinquency. For what happens during the psychosocial moratorium is of the utmost importance for the process of identity formation of the individual. The individual "takes time out" to find the deeper resources of his society. If society accepts too easily the formulation that delinquents are individual cases in need of treatment, it may create an ideological climate which it does not intend.

For the moment, however, let us merely become aware of the importance of thus "identifying" whole groups of young individuals on the basis of existing institutions, theories, and prejudices. It is probable that an epidemiological fact such as juvenile delinquency actually calls for the invention of new institutions. At any rate, our considerations should include not only research in juvenile delinquency as a clinical picture, but also research in the institutions that provide specific moratoria at the price of the individual's acceptance of a certain status, such as "patient."

Finally, it seems quite possible to me that juvenile delinquency, especially in its organized form, could and should be considered an attempt in itself at the creation of a psychosocial moratorium. In

fact, I would assume that delinquency has been a relatively institutionalized moratorium for a long time in parts of our society, and that it forces itself on the awareness of society now only because it proves too attractive and compelling for too many youngsters—from the better neighborhoods as well. To this possibility we must return later.

I must conclude my presentation of concepts. There is, third, the concept of **psychosocial crises.** We dealt with this amply at the White House Conference.[4] The chart I have here indicates, in the diagonal, what kind of crises I have in mind. I shall not repeat them. The chart makes graphically clear that this identity crisis at the end of adolescence is only one of a series of crises which on the chart are lined up (or rather down) from I, 1 to VIII, 8. The position of the identity crisis is V, 5.

In the verticals, there is differentiation through time, in the sense that all these psychosocial criteria in some way are given at the beginning. For instance, "identity versus identity diffusion," which becomes a crisis at adolescence, has a long prehistory, beginning even in infancy (I, 5 to VI, 5 on the chart). There are experiences in babyhood and in childhood that have something to do with identity; for example the way the baby perceives his reflection in the mother, even as she eagerly anticipates and studies her reflection in him. This kind of "mutual recognition" goes on throughout childhood, on an expanding scale. This means that some "prehistoric" identity diffusion can happen very early, in connection with a diffusion of the mother-image. This becomes retrospectively clear in the treatment of the most radical forms of identity diffusion in late adolescence. The important point, however, is that particular psychosocial criteria, while existing in some form earlier, meet their crises at certain stages when the final fate of the item is determined. Adolescence is the stage of identity formation, and seals its fate.

This **epigenetic principle** seems to hold true wherever something grows: growing is a differentiation of preplanned parts during a given sequence of critical periods. In personality growth, it is the task of the ego (in the psychoanalytic sense) and of the social process together to maintain that continuity which bridges the inescapable discontinuity between each one of these stages. There is, for instance, discontinuity between the trustful dependence of infancy and the stubborn autonomy of early childhood, and yet the second depends on the first. There is discontinuity between preoccupation with one's identity and a true capacity for intimacy; and yet again, the second is inconceivable without the first.

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[4] See Witmer, Helen L., and Kotinsky, Ruth: *Personality in the Making,* Boston, Harper & Brothers, 1952. Chapter I, for a resume of Erikson's ideas on this subject.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
I. Infancy	trust vs. mistrust				unipolarity vs. premature self-differentiation			
II. Early childhood		autonomy vs. shame, doubt			bipolarity vs. autism			
III. Play age			initiative vs. guilt		play identification vs. (oedipal) phantasy identities			
IV. School age				industry vs. inferiority	work identification vs. identity foreclosure			
V. Adolescence	time perspective vs. time diffusion	self-certainty vs. identity consciousness	role-experimentation vs. negative identity	anticipation of achievement vs. work-paralysis	identity vs. identity diffusion	sexual identity vs. bisexual diffusion	leadership polarization vs. authority diffusion	ideological polarization vs. diffusion of ideals
VI. Young adult					solidarity vs. social isolation	intimacy vs. isolation		
VII. Adulthood							generativity vs. self absorption	
VIII. Mature age								integrity vs. disgust, despair

Now in the horizontal of the chart we come closer to our subject. For here are the various aspects of identity diffusion which in their worst individual forms lead to borderline states and psychopathy, and which in their worst social manifestation become, I think, widespread symptoms of what will be described this afternoon as *anomie.*

Let me briefly point to the main components of identity diffusion as contained in the horizontal V. Ultimately each component should be discussed in connection with adolescence as a normative life-crisis; in connection with individual psychopathology; and finally, in connection with social pathology, such as delinquency.

First, I speak in V, 1 of a sense of *time diffusion.* This ranges from a *desperate urgency* (to act right now) to *utter apathy.* Phenomenologically, such diffusion is typical for all adolescents at one stage or another, but becomes pathologically marked in some. The tremendous changes in time-perspective in adolescence (backward and forward; infinity of phantasy, and immediate long-range commitment) are aspects of this diffusion. The original trust of the world (I, 1) is here challenged again, for emotional autonomy must now become complete. Time diffusion can re-awaken *basic mistrust,* and thus call on very primitive mechanisms.

Identity consciousness (V, 2) means preoccupation with discrepancies between the self-image (or images) and one's appearance in the eyes of others. The vanity and sensitivity of adolescents belong here, and also their apparent callousness to suggestions and their lack of shame in the face of criticisms. Again, these are primitive defenses, upholding a shaky self-certainty against *doubt* and *shame* (II, 2).

Connected with this, there is often a provocative experimentation with a *negative identity.* Adolescents, at one time or another, for longer or shorter periods, and with varying intensity, suddenly decide to try to be exactly what some significant people do not want them to be. It is here that what we analysts call compensations can suddenly crumble, causing inner anarchy and either paralysis of initiative or that pathological initiative which is crime (III, 3). Young people in extreme conditions may, in the end, find a greater sense of identity in being withdrawn or in being delinquent than in anything society has to offer them. Yet we underestimate the hidden sensitivity of these young people to the judgment of society at large. As Faulkner puts it: "Sometimes I think it ain't none of us pure crazy and ain't none of us pure sane until the balance of us talks him that-a-way." If the "balance of us" diagnose these young people as psychotic or delinquent, that may be the final step in the formation of a negative identity. To a high proportion of "confirmed" delinquents, society, since the beginning of their adolescence, has offered

only this one convincing "confirmation." Gangs, naturally, become the subsocieties for those thus confirmed.

Then **paralysis of workmanship.** Here you have merely to note the deep difference between "completing a job," in the sense of creating a value or a commodity of any kind, and "doing a job" (that is a burglary) or "making a good job of it" in the sense of completing a destruction. From here it is only one step to another obvious consideration; namely, that young people must have learned to enjoy a sense of workmanship (IV, 4) in order not to need the thrill of destruction. Schizoids and delinquents have in common a mistrust of themselves, a disbelief in the possibility that they could ever complete anything of value. This, of course, is especially marked in those who, for some reason or other, do not feel that they are partaking of the technological identity of today. The reason may be that their own gifts have not found contact with the productive aims of the machine age or that they themselves belong to a social class (here "upper-upper" is remarkably equal to "lower-lower") that does not partake of the stream of progress. I shall come back to that later.

Bisexual diffusion in adolescence (V, 6) needs little explanation. It fuses with identity-consciousness (V, 2) in the adolescent's preoccupation with the question of what kind of man or woman, or what kind of intermediate or deviate, he might become. An adolescent feels that to be a little less of one means to be much more of the other—or, rather, to be a little less of one means to be **all** of the other. If at such a time something happens that psychosocially marks him as a homosexual or a tomboy, as a mannish woman, or a "longhair," he may develop a deep fixation, connected with a negative identity, and true **intimacy** (VI, 6) will seem dangerous.

By **leadership polarization** (V, 7) I mean that the adolescent has to learn both to lead and to be led. He has to find out what the pecking order feels like. If this is short-circuited, he develops some kind of **authority diffusion.** Even leaders must be corporals first. On the question of who can tell whom, and what, the delinquent remains stuck.

Finally, there is **ideological polarization** (V, 8). Young people must be given meaningful ideological opposites from which to choose (or to think they choose) a clearly marked group-identity, and a clearly rationalized repudiation of other identities. Otherwise, **ideological diffusion** will make a well-sustained identity formation impossible. Offhand, it might seem that the present division of the world into two worlds provides such clearly marked opposites. But I would think that an analysis of the effect of the cold war on youth (probably on both sides) would show that this is an ideological war between people in late middle age, and that youth is not only not ideologically involved and committed but has become somewhat suspicious of the whole thing.

Now, I should approach this whole matter of identity diffusion from an epidemiological point of view, for which purpose I must throw the term "totalism" into the discussion.

In adolescence, there is an increased trend toward what I propose to call "totalism." I alluded to this when I said that the diffused adolescent, when faced with opposites, tends to become totally one of the opposites. Say a diffused girl experiments with her potentialities for a slim, groomed role and a fat, unkempt one. She may become the latter and then regret the choice and wish to undo it. But only very specific circumstances will permit her to do so: specific inner states, specific developmental stages, and specific conditions. These we know little about—although we like to ascribe the change to our own efforts if it happens that the girl abandons obesity overnight and becomes a slim, well-groomed creature.

The step from here to epidemiology and to *anomie* is implied in the fact that there are groups of marginal people who make such total choices for their members: groups of eccentrics, neurotics, homosexuals, addicts. Here an idiosyncratic inner attitude finds recognition in a deviant and yet uniform (and, in fact, uniformed) group. You are all aware of the fact that some form of "zoot-suiters" is spreading all over the world at this moment. Zoot-suiters are found in Moscow, in Tel Aviv, and in South Africa (where they are called "Zootsies") as well as in Los Angeles. In England there are the Eddy-boys, a belated caricature of Edwardian dandies.

I frankly would see a direct connection—if a distant and complicated one—between these spontaneous deviations in some countries and the appeal of uniforms, as representing militant ideological movements, in others.

These, then are the concepts that I would propose for discussion. I accepted the Children's Bureau's request to present my ideas to you because I believe that these concepts, while pointing out little that is new, do tie together what is known in a way that has both consistency in itself and consistent relations to psychoanalytic psychology in general. If this is so, the concepts should find verification through their applicability to juvenile delinquency. In this sense I am not telling you, I am asking you.

Now let us use these concepts to see what inner gain the lonewolf delinquent, as well as the gang member, may derive from a total choice of delinquency as a way of life or as a goal for life.[5] If we

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[5] In my paper referred to above, I have indicated in detail how these adolescent conflicts find a temporary "solution" in borderline conditions. I would like to point out to psychopathologists that we can probably learn a lot from juxtaposing "borderline conditions" and "delinquency"—in a way comparable to Freud's original juxtaposition of hysteria and perversion. In both pairs, the first expresses by inaction and displacement what the second "lives out."

don't know the delinquent's inner, unconscious gain, we remain blind to the very core of his resistance to our insistence that he should be somebody else or that he should say (and feel) that he is sorry. This resistance is stronger at given stages of the game and at given ages, as I shall specify later.

I think that juvenile delinquency saves some young individuals from "time diffusion." There is an enormous restriction of time-perspective in the delinquent state, be it in the moment of an impulsive crime or in the process of joining gangs and their plans. The dominant emphasis there is on what you are going to do next in satisfaction of a need for, say, revenge or for just "doing something," "going somewhere," or "getting at somebody"— a tremendous simplification of social modalities.

"Identity consciousness" is escaped also; or, at any rate, it is firmly hidden by the delinquent's particular identification-with-himself-in-the-role-of delinquent, which offers such an impenetrable facade to investigator and judge. This facade denies any emotional response, and especially any sense of shame and guilt. This is the outward appearance of a total choice, such as, for example, the one young Nazis displayed on a large scale in Canadian prisoner-of-war camps. These phenomena are aspects of psychological and group-psychological processes and not of personality traits. This closing up, this provocative smugness, this lack of response and, especially, of any show of remorse cover a radical fear of the state of excessive identity diffusion—especially after this state has been potentially intensified by deeds which the individual cannot possibly afford to face objectively: that is, from the most advanced viewpoint of his culture. To be delinquent or even psychotic sometimes seems preferable to the anxiety which is set free by a more objective appraisal of one's contradictory identity fragments. Yet judge after judge hammers at the young individuals, giving them a "chance" at the price of remorse—the one price that they simply cannot afford to pay.

"Work paralysis," the inability to enjoy the mastery of materials and of cooperative situations, is also avoided by young people who take to delinquency. This kind of mastery in our (and in any) culture is the backbone of identity formation. In delinquents there appears, instead of "work paralysis," a perverse but deep satisfaction in "doing a job" in the criminal sense, and even in destroying all of one's identity fragments in one single moment of crime, which will legally seal one's negative identity once and for all and make unnecessary any further search and disappointment.

Then, too, delinquent behavior saves many individuals from "bisexual diffusion." The overdoing of the phallic-sadistic role on the

part of the boy delinquent, and the careless and loveless promiscuity on the part of the girl, offer an escape from a sense of sexual inferiority.

As for "authority diffusion," it is clear that, at least in organized delinquency, you have an authority division and hierarchy that clearly alines the young person with an ingroup of equals, headed by a leader, and with a clearly defined outgroup in the form of other gangs and individual deserters. It is clear who is boss, and the boss has the external means of enforcement: quite a relief from individual responsibility.[6]

It is in this way that I would approach juvenile delinquency with concepts gained from the observation of other kinds of juvenile disturbance. Obviously, only a whole seminar could settle the theoretical interconnection between these concepts and their application to the bewildering mass of phenomena.

Let me, in conclusion, select a few significant items that concern delinquent *acts* rather than the delinquent *role.* In these acts I would like to focus on the prank, the thrill, the loss of perspective. So far, I must have seemed to you to emphasize unduly—at any rate, for a psychoanalyst—the psychosocial aspects of the matter and to have underemphasized the psychosexual ones. I did this in order to right a previous disbalance in favor of a purely psychosexual explanation, one primarily based on the conflict between instinctual drives and conscience. My point is that what I have described here as identity provides the specific ego strength that helps youth to manage both increased drive and conflicting standards. On the other hand, ego diffusion leaves youth wide open both for explosive drives and shattering conflicts.

Among the necessary ingredients of adolescing is experimentation with the borderline between phantasy and reality. In the healthy adolescent, a great capacity for phantasy is matched by ego mechanisms that permit him to go far into dangerous regions of phantasy or social experiment and to catch himself at the last moment and divert himself in company, in activity, in literature or music. To learn by experience to delineate the phantasy world and to master actively the relative plasticity of reality is, of course, a most important aspect of the establishment of identity. It seems to me that our times endanger this self-corrective experience instead of supporting it, as times are supposed to do—at least after they have gotten used to themselves.

There is first of all what you might call the *locomotorist intoxication* in our culture—the mere pleasure of driving around, or rather

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[6] The impulsive criminal solves his authority diffusion by inducing society to suppress him totally.

of being driven around by powers stronger and faster than those of the human body. I call it locomotorist because it has, in the vast majority of people, completely replaced the pleasure of locomotion. They won't walk around the block if they can help it; they prefer the passive pleasure of sitting in a soft car, turning the key, and zooming around.

The second intoxication (now conveniently combined with the first in drive-in shows) is the passive **intoxication by moving spectacles**— moving pictures and sports spectacles, in all of which continuous motion with dramatic patterns and climaxes is observed while you yourself sit still. Such motion is now gradually enhanced by techniques that make you see what the naked eye could not behold, and this to the accompaniment of exciting sound. In TV, even your own response is being taken over by canned applause or laughter, set loose by experts.

It is not my purpose to bewail the times. Rather, I would point to the specific challenge of all this to youth and to ourselves. Youth is an eminently locomotor period. Especially the healthy youth has kept from his early psychosexual development a strong locomotor orientation which, in adolescence, when psychosexual latency is over but mature genitality is still remote, takes over much of sexual tension. In boys, this expresses itself in what you might describe as various forms of "tearing after"; in girls, as forms of "running around." This, of course, is often done without any particular destination in mind; in fact, young people invent and exploit all kinds of purposes merely to keep on the move.

Here it must be remembered that in adolescence complete sexual satisfaction is not only legally postponed or handicapped by too much conscience; in addition, an adolescent, because he has not solved his identity problems to a sufficient degree, cannot have a satisfactory genitality, complete sexual satisfaction. This, then, keeps delinquent sexuality, if ever so "free," from being an effective safety valve. In fact, most of the sexual activities of delinquent youth are indulged in with a determined lack of emotional participation. It is the thrill of the act, and the capacity **not** to lose yourself in it, that marks the experience as a delinquent experiment.

Thus it remains true here, too, that young people have to live out much of their sexual tension in locomotor activities, which, of course, enjoy their own autonomous increase of vigor in adolescence. At this point, it is quite possible that, among the marginal and endangered, it is the more vigorous, the less inhibited, the stronger children who are apt to get into trouble; they prefer delinquency to neurotic regression. Some of the weaker children (weak in drive, weak in self-assertion, although perhaps strong in intellectual defenses) can

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avoid delinquency and settle their tension with masturbation and with intellectualization.

One could cite any number of primitive societies to show how they divide up sex roles in adolescence in such a way that desirable identities find support. For example, the Sioux encouraged their boys to steal horses as well as to rape girls, while they considered it the girl's fault if she "ran around" too far.[7] Many societies thus create a double standard for their young people. Faced with an increase of dangerous deviations, we may well ask ourselves what types we have come to foster, and what types we exclude from opportunities.

Let me relate all this to one of the biggest items on the delinquency list; namely, what is called car theft. You know how important it is to differentiate juvenile acts on developmental as well as on legal grounds. The general population does not know that there is a difference between one car theft and another. He did appropriate a car, didn't he? So he stole a car! That an older man may appropriate a car in order to own it or sell it, while a younger one may step into it because he just wanted to sit behind a steering wheel and step on the gas and may have found himself beyond the State line before he knew it—that differentiation is not honored by law and public opinion. In addition to this, the sexual symbolism as well as the sexual activities taking place in cars are highly important for youth. A boy with a car, no matter where he "borrowed" it, is more impressive and more useful to girls: he can either count on his sexual rewards or is in a better position to appropriate them. Legally, this is rape.

To the discussion of locomotorist intoxication, then, I would add passive visual stimulation by moving pictures, television, billboards, etc., in order to point out a simple quantitative disbalance characterizing our time; namely, that between passive stimulation and active outlet.

I do not like to fool around with such questions as to whether certain movies, TV shows, or comic books are good or bad for children. As a citizen and as a father I would insist that they are ugly and worthless, and I, for one, would tell my children so and would try to restrict their opportunities to see them. If they want to see them anyway, that is up to them. It is better for them to rebel than to have parents with totally compromised values. But as a psychologist, I do not know how to be sure that particular themes lead to particular acts. Some amount of weird make-believe can be digested by healthy children.

But I think I can point with conviction to one overall danger that has to be dealt with by our civilization sooner or later, and that is

[7] The price for this (and other) divisions of sex role seems to have been the relatively more common occurrence of depressive states and suicides in women.

the enormous passive intoxication offered hour by hour, day by day, to young persons who need play and activity, initiative, imagination, and, most of all, need to handle their phantasy life in their own active way. Mass communication, for the first time in history, offers to children an outer phantasy life, right up to the time they fall asleep. This phantasy life is produced commercially and canned by people whom most of us would not select as company for our children. Yet we permit them to sneak their phantasies into the minds of our children on a scale characterized by powers of persuasion such as: ubiquity, ease of availability, addictive reinforcement by all the refined methods of sound, sight, and word; association with products that "improve" on life by making you look and smell better, induce you to imbibe and inhale more effective "chasers" after the rigors of life, and intoxicate you, oh, so pleasantly. All this is created for momentary thrill, with none of the distillation that, in older forms of communication, made art forms (fairy tales, story books, jokes) representative of cultural trends.

Now I am not naive enough to say we must do away with it, nor do I feel that legislation will settle the matter. Some time ago we had a town meeting that discussed the question of how to deal with the thousand big trucks that go through Stockbridge night after night. An old lady said, "Why don't we give transportation back to the railroads?" I am not trying to emulate her. But I would say that we must learn to understand what this progress of ours does to our children, and also what resources in our children may lead to an immunity that we should learn to support.

I hope that Professor Merton will remark on the strange new group formations that we call, say, a television audience: so many isolated individuals seeing the same thing but having no communication with each other and no possibility of group reactions, such as joint laughter, protest, approval, enthusiasm. Thus the balance and safety of the active and responsive group is withheld from the child, as is, probably, that spontaneous set of inner defenses that permits the adolescent to experiment with and to absorb his own morbid and sadistic phantasy life—but not that of his expert adult exploiters.

In the astonishing increase, then, of impulsive criminal and delinquent acts perpetrated by young individuals and gangs, I see, primarily, perverse forms of what in psychoanalysis we call "turning passive into active." By this we mean that the human ego cannot stand more than a certain amount of passivity and of victimization. Normally, the play of children and the games, pranks, and sports of young people, as well as imagination and intellectual pursuits, provide safety valves even as they advance capabilities and opportunities that feed into identity formation. However, where capabilities are undernourished and opportunities questionable, the lag between child-

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ish play and adult act becomes unbearable: destructive prank becomes that vehicle of initiative, which, once employed, too often—and too late—proves to possess defective brakes.

This, then, is what I have to offer by way of a conceptual introduction.

Miss KOTINSKY: I propose now that we make comments on Dr. Erikson's statements and ask him questions about them for the purpose of clarification. Later, after we have heard from Professor Merton, we can go into more detailed discussion of our own ideas on the bearing of both their statements on delinquency.

Dr. NEUBAUER: First of all I would like to say that I find the concepts proposed by Dr. Erikson extraordinarily stimulating and also very useful. They tend to formulate certain areas of possible conflict of ego psychology, ego structure, and by so doing they bring us closer to a link with social conflict and other social phenomena. This in itself I think represents a very important step toward the formulation of some hypotheses which have been missing, at least in psychoanalytic literature.

Some of the definitions were not very clear, but I think it is more important now to test the degree to which the concepts proposed are sufficiently specific for the problem of delinquency. Here I have one or two questions.

I understood the psychological moratorium to be a part of normal development, analogous to the latency stage in normal psychosexual development. At a given period, one can expect an adolescent to engage in role-playing in identity; this is essential in order that he find an adequate identity and not assume a predetermined one too early. But if this is a part of normal development, a question arises in my mind as to its bearing on delinquency.

On the one hand, I had the impression from the examples given by Dr. Erikson that there is something positive in the delinquent's insistence on an extension of this psychosocial moratorium; and one could derive from it a certain concept of health. On the other hand, I wonder whether the delinquent does not eliminate the psychosocial moratorium by predetermining his role, finding an identity too early outside the range of those normally accepted in society at large.

Essentially, the question I raise is whether Dr. Erikson would be able at the present time to say something more about the pathology of the psychosocial moratorium as it relates to delinquents. What was very clear to me about normal development became less clear in its applicability to the specific question of delinquency.

Mr. REDL: I thought Erikson tried to show that what we call delinquency is precisely the choice that some adolescents with diffuse iden-

tity have been making. But I agree with Neubauer that the more we can hear about that, the luckier we are.

Miss KOTINSKY: And I was interested in the moratorium in terms of its social extension. Would the argument be that, as presently structured, society doesn't permit the adolescent anything but a snitched moratorium, so to speak? Would this imply some restructuring of the agencies and institutions that bear on adolescents?

Mr. KOBRIN: My first question is on the concept of ego identity. Erikson said that the person comes to feel most himself where he means most to others. Now the problem arises, which others? That is to say, as we look at the gamut of social contacts and relationships which the adolescent has, it seems to me we must distinguish which among all these people actually or symbolically present become the most "significant others"—and significant for what purpose.

It seems to me that this becomes a key question setting up any kind of action research designed to modify the behavior of the delinquent child; that is, to conceptualize which others are significant to him.

The second question is this. The statement occurs that the community's function is to recognize the person as an individual. I am wondering whether the community's interest may not be only in the public identity of the person as somehow distingiushed from a private identity or identities? That is, the community's interest is only in the formal roles the person plays; it has no opportunity to respond to him except on that basis. There is a practical aspect to this in the question of how, let us say, a juvenile court judge responds to the culprit before him. Does he see him solely in terms of his identity as a delinquent? What do newspaper editors, for example, see the delinquent as? Obviously they see him first and primarily in terms of his public role of delinquent.

The third question has to do with the idea that the psychosocial moratorium is a period during which "nothing counts," thus permitting a person to commit and uncommit himself. Now this, I think, perhaps needs some amplification. For example, can a delinquent uncommit himself? What possible roles can he experiment with, once he experiments with the role of delinquent? Conventional youngsters do play a number of roles experimentally. They can uncommit themselves very readily because they have not put themselves, so to speak, in crucial jeopardy as has the youngster who plays with the role of the delinquent.

Another question has to do with the concept of continuity, and a subsidiary idea having to do with negative identity.

I am wondering to what extent the formation of a negative identity has elements of social health, of mental health, in it. Perhaps it is

precisely this capacity for forming a negative identity that provides the source for institutional revision whenever society's institutions begin to disintegrate. The shock troops for the revision of these institutions may be recruited precisely from among young persons who have borne a negative identity.

My final question is not a question at all, but a matter of factual accuracy which may have some importance for one aspect of the general theory. The characteristic "authority diffusion," which I certainly recognize as existing, is not altogether well represented by what goes on in organized delinquency. It's my observation that the leadership structure of the delinquent gang is not quite so explicitly organized into leaders and followers as is sometimes thought.

I have seen many gangs, and it is hard for me to identify the "real leaders" of the group except for temporary periods, in a transitory kind of way. These groups furthermore have such impermanence in time. They form and dissolve in such rapid succession that one finds different divisions coming to the fore for initiating delinquent acts. Perhaps it would be possible to abstract out of the total picture certain personality types that provide this leadership over the long haul, in that they more readily initiate delinquent acts and seduce others to come along with them. But I do think the picture of a tightly organized leadership-followership structure in a delinquent group ought to be checked carefully against the facts.

Mr. ERIKSON: May I make one remark here? I think many questions will have to remain open until Dr. Merton takes up the problem from the sociological side this afternoon. I certainly want to answer questions if they are only for clarification. But I myself am mostly interested in hearing reactions to what I have said and to what Professor Merton will say.

Mr. TELLER: I would like to make a statement that is meant as a question. I want to know whether the following formulation and my deductions from it are correct.

Implicit in Dr. Erikson's statement this morning and in the paper he sent us are the following facts: (1) the need for a psychosocial moratorium, in varying degrees, is to be expected of most adolescents; (2) society institutionalizes such a moratorium, and, (3) deviating behavior may be the result of the choice of a moratorium pattern other than the institutionalized one offered by society.

If this is accurate, such a deviant choice seems explainable only on two assumptions: one that the prevailing institutionalized moratorium pattern is inadequate to fill the needs of a segment of the age group that needs this break in continuity, and the other that society demands commitment at too early a stage.

If this in turn is accurate, further research may have to focus upon a more specific analysis by the psychiatrist of the need, and a more specific analysis by the social scientist of the prevailing institutionalized moratorium pattern.

Mr. LANDER: I would just like to refer to one specific hypothesis: that the community's characterization of a boy as a delinquent may provide a basis for understanding his future behavior. Erikson has conceptualized this for us in his presentation.

I would like to ask two questions. My impression is that the primary emphasis in Mr. Erikson's presentation has been on the centrality of the identity problem in adolescence even though he indicates that its sources may lie further back. According to my own experience and the literature in the field, delinquent behavior does not ordinarily begin in adolescence but in play activity at the age of 8 or 9. The average age of first coming into juvenile court is about 9 years. Delinquency seems to be at least a primary problem at a much earlier age than the period of adolescence. And I would like clarification of the tie-up of the identity problem with the earlier etiology of delinquent behavior.

My second question relates to the distribution of types of identity conflict in different types of communities. Undoubtedly there is more delinquency in some communities than in others. To what extent, and why, do different kinds of identity conflict reflect themselves more frequently in delinquency in one neighborhood and in other psychic forms of maladjustment in another? Are the reasons primarily psychological or do they include a sociological explanation which ties up with the psychological approach?

Mr. GOULD: It seems to me that definition of identity as involving the youth's being most himself where he means most to others can be translated into the concept of role, as it has been expressed by Talcott Parsons, among others. Parsons' concept of role is the spot at which the individual's need-disposition system is integrated with the requirements of the social system, and it seems to me useful in this context.

Mr. ERIKSON: Some of your questions are too good for my comfort because they show up deficiencies in my formulation. Others should be asked again tomorrow after both sides, my individual and Professor Merton's sociological side, have been presented.

To take up first the question of the psychosocial moratorium and its particular nature in delinquency, I may say this: a moratorium does not need to be consciously experienced as such. On the contrary, the young individual may feel deeply committed and may learn only much later that what he took so seriously was only a period of transition. Many "recovered" delinquents probably feel quite estranged

about the "foolishness" that has passed. It is true, however (and this was my point concerning "pranks that backfire") that any true moratorium experimentation with idealities is also a play with fire, the inner fire of emotions and drives, and the outer danger of ending up in a social "pocket" from which there is no return. Then the moratorium has failed; the individual is too early defined, he has committed himself because society has committed him.

That sounds like a pun. But I canot separate those two statements, really. If society didn't commit him, did not insist on considering juvenile delinquency in legal terms that are only applicable (as far as they go) to adult circumstances, it wouldn't be such a pocket. There must have been juvenile delinquency on a smaller scale in some communities in the past, when it was more or less accepted as a transitory way of life.

Now, as to areas in which to become a delinquent is to attain a positive identity, I think we need Professor Merton's presentation of **anomie** first. I did not mean to imply that juvenile delinquency (except under rare conditions) is a successful moratorium. I did imply that, given a certain amount of **anomie,** it offers itself as a seeming way out from identity diffusion. Delinquency is thus an abortive attempt at an adjustment, and it feels to the individual involved at least like a short-range solution, much as he may remember in the back of his mind (which he tries to close off) the long-range problems which now may become hopelessly irreversible.

I can imagine, however, that in certain towns, even reasonably healthy towns (except for the tensions of this period of universal crisis) a certain number of young people, with particular kinds of identity diffusion, might almost "spontaneously" invent delinquency as a way out for one another. I say this without underestimating the role of the mass media as unwitting campaigns for juvenile delinquency.

On the other hand, there are neighborhoods in which delinquency is presented to youngsters very early as a norm: in such neighborhoods delinquency exists with a minimum of individual identity diffusion. But here we obviously have a state of group identity diffusion—concerning a whole group in relation to wider society. If a whole group feels that they are in an isolated pocket of society, can any member of this group be a "well-adjusted delinquent"? Here I am on Professor Merton's territory.

A last word about moratorium. Something is happening all over the world that changes the nature of all institutionalized moratoria, most of which, I think, are based on past technologies. I hope that the Children's Bureau collects data on juvenile delinquency in other countries as well as our own. If so, we could see how much delinquency is a matter of technological shifts and of over-all changes in

society, and how much is specifically American or specifically big city or small city or what not.

But to speak just of this country, one could discuss what direction the psychosocial moratorium has taken in American history. Take "going West" as an institutionalized possibility; or transient manual work for upper-class and middle-class children. The reliance on chance and choice in American life, as a typically American moratorium, is in the process of falling victim to increasing structuralization and hierarchization. The modalities of "tearing after" and of "getting ahead" by "getting going" and "going after" are changing. Even in the West, adventurous young people, with less than a given number of dollars in their pockets, are likely to be put into jail as vagrants when found asleep outdoors. Types, once full of wild promise, are now treated with suspicion by the police. Even the police officer who knows how to act psychologically, who has had some courses in child development, still treats them as something potentially explosive.

About the significance of "the others" in the identity formation of young people, it should be noted that I added "those others who have come to mean most to him." I think that it would be a research project of the first order to find out who are the people who have come to mean something to an adolescent and how. When does that (overtly) shrink to a small group or gang? When does it expand and include, let us say, certain adults who could (if they would) have considerable influence on him? But then, there must be a potential significance in people whom the young individual seems to ignore completely, as long as they ignore him.

Now to the question as to whether the community is only interested in the individual's formal roles. Well, it depends on what one means by community. The wider community, certainly, is interested in fewer and more general aspects of a person's development: whether he obeys laws and conventions, passes examinations and tests, associates with the right people, etc. Any adolescent would be in more intense relationship with a few people who belonged to his previous radius of intimate acquaintances; and yet he is also searching for and anticipating the emergence from the wider society of individuals who will become significant and decisive in his life: uncles, teachers, masters, sergeants, foremen, managers, owners, judges. With them he often lives in an intense but one-sided relationship, which they neither reciprocate nor even know of. They, in fact, often ward off a fleeting sense of significance by withdrawing into their respective occupational roles. To enlighten the wider community in this depersonalized technological world, to teach them to know more about their direct and personal significance in the lives of young people, seems an important step ahead of us.

Can a negative identity be a healthy thing: yes, certainly. It is true for all the crises and for all the aspects of the moratorium that a transitory emphasis on the negative can mean a disengagement from conventions and thus a step in the direction of the rejuvenation of conventions and institutions. This, in fact, is the *social* significance of adolescence. Certainly a transitory choice of a negative identity is a crossroads—if one not too clearly marked in its alternatives—that can lead to distinction as well as to delinquency or psychopathology.

What we have not discussed is the fact that young people, at times, have to be against something. It may shock some of you, but it is important for an individual's identity formation that he should very much belong to one kind of people and, temporarily, be dead set against another kind.

To feel repudiated can vastly intensify this inner necessity to repudiate. Now and again you see in adolescents a breakthrough of the necessity for perversely repudiating—something. Occasionally juvenile gangs beat up or even murder somebody just because he looked unconcerned, unaggressive, minding his own business. Suddenly they feel that that guy has to be "eliminated." We should listen a little closer to what they say afterwards—as long as they still talk. Was this their only alternative to being against—themselves?

Now to the question as to when it all starts. Yes, it certainly mostly starts at 8 or 9, with a more or less playful and as yet uncommitted misbehavior in small groups. But when does it get fixed, when does a misbehaving child become "a delinquent," and when does the delinquent become so "confirmed" that he cannot "uncommit" himself? Or is it possible that this confirmation of the negative identity is only transitory after all; that we could learn to treat it as a moratorium which may come to a spontaneous end or, at any rate, change into a state that will facilitate rehabilitation?

I should think the play aspect is stronger at 8 or 9 and the total commitment stronger around 16, while a choice between a return to society and a "desperado" identity is possible at an even later period. So how it starts, how it gets confirmed, and when it could end should be reappraised in terms of the stages of psychosocial development.
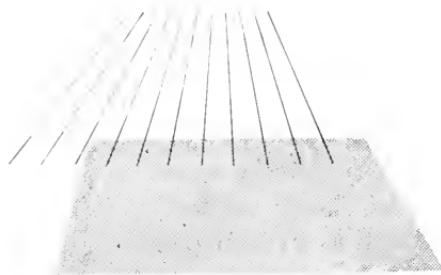
The Social-Cultural Environment and *Anomie*

The second session of the conference was given over to Professor Merton's statement and to discussion of it for the purpose of clarification and elaboration. This statement dealt with certain sociological concepts and ways of thinking about deviant behavior. Through it two sets of variables, in addition to the psychological, were introduced into the discussion: the social and the cultural. How these two sets influence each other and how together they may lead to **anomie**, and hence to delinquency, were also touched upon.

Mr. MERTON: I have taken my letter of instruction from the Children's Bureau quite literally. At one point in that letter, Dr. Witmer said politely, but inescapably, that the speakers, Dr. Erikson and myself, were here more nearly in a symbolic than in a realistic capacity; that she had gone to great pains to assemble a group of minds that would, in their interactions, produce something new and exciting, if still debatable; and that the speakers had it as their office simply to get the ball rolling in one direction or another, with the complete assurance that the group would redirect its course before long. So I should like to follow the pattern that was laid down for me by saying relatively little and saying that as rapidly as I can.

It seemed to me that it might be useful to polarize the discussion at the outset and then see what happens. Dr. Erikson has more or less taken the same tack—that of polarizing the discussion, not in terms of incompatible ways of thinking about the problems of deviant behavior, but in terms of emphasizing one or another way of thinking about it, with the aim, of seeing how diverse modes of conceptualizing behavior that departs from normative standards may be brought together.

With that in mind, I should like to start with the proposition that in the field of social psychology, less so in sociology, and considerably

so in psychology, there is and has been a marked tendency to think of the social environment as more or less self-evident in its character and operation. The social environment, however defined by various observers, tends to be thought of as something which is easy to describe, as something which is open to direct observation, in contrast, perhaps, to the endopsychic constitution of individuals, which is difficult to detect and difficult to describe. The social environment, being "out there," is often assumed to be open to direct observation, in a sense in which the psychic structure of individuals is not.

Reinforcing this notion of the relatively easy accessibility of the observer to the salient aspects of a social environment is the otherwise useful tendency to distinguish between macroscopic observations and microscopic observations. And, broadly speaking, the social environment is placed in the macroscopic realm. Once again, the social environment is commonly regarded as a man-sized phenomenon which can be seen with the naked eye as distinct from the very subtle instrumentalities which are taken to be essential to observation of the microscropic aspects of the human being in his psychological make-up.

Also contributing to this tendency for the social environment to be treated as relatively unproblematic is the assumption (particularly in the field of deviant behavior) that the categories for description of social environments are ready to hand. The social environment is often described in terms of a broken home or of family conflict, in terms of such categories as slum areas, areas of transition, substandard housing, and so on through the whole array of established and crystallized descriptive categories which so often tend to come to mind as the way in which to describe the salient environment of those who misbehave.

There is also a tendency, in thinking about the social environment of individual behavior, to lay great emphasis on the milieu rather than on the larger social structure. By the milieu I mean the immediate environment in the form of the interpersonal relations and social relationships in which a particular individual is directly engaged. And for this, of course, there is a great deal to be said. Yet there seems to have developed an over-emphasis on the milieu, as contrasted with the larger social structure, in dealing with the social environment of human behavior.

It is a little like the prevailing resistance among physical scientists in the 17th century to the notion of action at a distance. To relate the behavior of individuals to the larger social structure—the class structure or the political structure of a total society—raises the problem of how this massive larger environment can have a direct impact upon individuals living in it; the emphasis therefore shifts to the intervening social structures, namely, the milieu.

Observation of the milieu is theoretically essential, but it is not sufficient. It is essential because the pressures of the larger social structure are mediated through the intervening structure. But useful as it is, the tendency to focus on the immediate milieu (the patterns of interpersonal relations in which individuals are directly involved) has led to relative neglect of the larger social structure.

Reinforcing these other tendencies toward a somewhat limited or unexamined conception of the social environment is the great emphasis in sociology upon the salient social environment as that which is directly experienced by the people living in it, the emphasis upon the subjective orientation, upon definitions of the situation, upon the social perceptions of environment, upon the diverse definitions of the objectively same environment by individuals variously located in the group. Once again, this seems to me an essential component of the description of the environment—the preparation of the specimen for analysis, if you will—but it has often had the result of obscuring the possible pertinence of social structures larger than those which are directly at the focus of the individual's attention or to which he is more or less directly exposed.

Moreover, our concern, as social scientists, with differential responses of individuals to the same objective social environment has led us to put great emphasis, by and large, upon individual differences, not merely of personality, but of the position occupied by individuals in society, and again has focused the attention of the observer on the part rather than on the whole.

I start with these few allusions to tendencies in thinking about the social environment as relatively unproblematic, easily describable, and locally assignable, not because I think that any material changes in these emphases can be introduced in the course of study of juvenile delinquency. But it does seem that the kind of detailed analysis of components and interrelations and operations of personality which we have come to expect from the psychologist needs to be supplemented by and connected to parallel detailed analysis of the components, interrelations, and operations of the social structure that the sociologist provides. Both require analytical categories which have theoretical relevance. The categories most effective for analyzing the social environment do not resemble the "blanket" (unanalyzed) categories of "broken homes," "slum areas," and the like. A seamless web between the psychological analysis of personality in relation to deviant behavior and the sociological analysis of environment in relation to deviant behavior will be woven only if students of such behavior give the same attention to the detailed development of the latter that they have for some time given to the detailed development of the former.

This, then, is one central problem which the group may want to

take up for systematic review: what are the working conceptions of social environment in current thinking about juvenile delinquency?

More briefly, I should like to raise a second question of like kind; that is, with regard to the concept of juvenile delinquency or, as I would prefer to put it more broadly, the concept of deviant behavior, of which juvenile delinquency is presumably one form. As someone who has never engaged in first-hand research in this field, I feel free to suggest that the concept "juvenile delinquency" belongs to the family of blanket concepts which obscure rather than clarify our understanding of human behavior. Let me try to elaborate, if not to defend, that proposal.

As with any other class of human behavior, a designating tag or label has been introduced. In the course of assigning a class name, however, there develops a tendency to attend primarily to the similarities, consequential or not, between the items which are encompassed in that class. And since there are institutions which deal with "juvenile delinquency," and great popular concern with "juvenile delinquency," the term recurs time without end, and there develops in turn a presupposition that this is in some sense a thing, an entity. The "juvenile delinquent" comes to be regarded as a type; quite varied forms of behavior which violate established norms come to be designated by the generic term, "juvenile delinquency." Yet, can we accept the presumption that this wide array of behaviors or the individuals engaging in one or another of these behaviors are of substantially like kind? For all salient purposes, is a "delinquent" who periodically engages in petty theft the same kind of individual and member of his group as one who periodically engages in violent attacks on others?

The decision to encompass so much under the one rubric tends to lead, I think, to the further assumption that we can look for an encompassing theory of "juvenile delinquency." The location of a great variety of behaviors under one heading naturally leads us to assume that it is what those behaviors have in common that is most relevant, and this assumption leads us to look for an all-encompassing set of propositions which will account for the entire range of behaviors. This is not too remote from the assumption of a John Brown or a Benjamin Rush that there must be *a* theory of disease, rather than distinct theories of disease—of tuberculosis and of arthritis, of typhoid and syphilis—theories which are diverse rather than single. Just as grouping enormously varied conditions and processes under the one rubric of disease led some zealous medical systematists to believe that it was their task to evolve a single overarching theory of disease, so it seems that the established convention of idiom, both vernacular and social scientific, of referring to "juvenile delinquency" as though it were an entity, leads many to believe that there must be a basic theory of "its" causation.

This is not merely a terminological convention then, but a preconception requiring revision. We are concerned, not with an explanation of juvenile delinquency, but with explanations of various types of deviant behavior among youth. Perhaps this is enough to indicate what I have in mind by referring to "juvenile delinquency" as a blanket concept which may get in the way of defining the problem rather than aid us to define it.

A third set of questions has to do with further consideration of the notion of social environment, now in relation to the concept of *anomie.* The salient environment of individuals in groups can be usefully thought of as involving the cultural structure on the one hand and the social structure on the other. However intimately connected these are, it is nevertheless essential to keep them separate for purposes of analysis before they are brought together again. A rough working definition of cultural structure is that organized set or normative values which is common to members of a designated group. And by the social structure we mean roughly that organized set of social relationships in which members of the group are variously implicated or involved.

The importance of the distinction between the two comes out even in a quick glimpse at some important lines of theoretical development in sociology. As we all know, in recent years certain branches of social science have been greatly concerned with the relations between culture and personality. Some have come to think of personality virtually as the mirror of the culture in which individuals find themselves. At the extreme, personality is thought of as essentially a kind of localization of prevailing cultural values, a composite of those values embedded in a particular psyche.

Not only has this proved to be a rather impotent conception—if that is not a contradiction in terms—but it is really tantamount to declaring the psychologists of personality to be out of work. For, to the extent that this conception is taken seriously, it in effect calls for comprehensive and exacting description of the content of a particular culture and the assignment of that essential content to the members of the group carrying that culture.

This view raises the question whether the impact of the culture upon human beings is primarily a direct one, or whether the effects of culture often operate by indirection. In this latter conception, cultural values may help to produce behavior which is at odds with cultural mandates themselves. Not only the direct but the indirect consequences of culture result in certain kinds of deviant behavior.

Furthermore, it can be held that it is not useful to consider the impact of culture, direct or indirect, without relating that to the ways in which the social organization strains that culture, makes parts of it available to some sectors of the group and not to others, and acts as a barrier or as an open door to the acting out of the cultural mandate.

It is important to recognize the independent variability of the cultural structure on the one hand and of social structure on the other.

It was this line of theoretical thinking which some years ago I attempted to develop in a paper entitled "Social Structure and *Anomie.*" [8] I have no intention of regurgitating what was set down there; I allude to it because Dr. Witmer expressed an interest in having its principal conceptions discussed at this meeting and because it does bring out what seemed to me then, as now, to be some pertinent general considerations.

Most generally, the basic proposition set forth in this paper is that some unknown but substantial proportion of deviant behavior does not represent impulses of individuals breaking through social controls, but, on the contrary, represents socially induced deviations—deviations which the culture and the social organization conjoin to produce. In other words, social and cultural structures exert a definite pressure upon certain persons to engage in nonconforming rather than conforming conduct.

This is only seemingly paradoxical. Under certain conditions, the very cultural norms which claim the allegiance of members of a society help generate behavior diverging from such norms. They do so by virtue of marked malintegration with the underlying social structure.

A particular example of this general proposition which I attempted to put forward in that paper (and I want to stress that I consider it an example rather than an effort to state the total case) begins with the fact that the American culture involves certain value emphases loosely and ineptly summed up as an emphasis upon certain forms of occupational success which are enjoined upon *all* members of the society. Not, of course, that identical standards of achievement are generally exacted of all members of society, whatever their differences of class position, but only that prevailing orientations assign great emphasis to such "success" and regard it as appropriate that all strive for it. I do not mean, of course, that all members of all classes in fact accept this value emphasis and assimilate it into their personal value structure. Nor do I think it necessary to this way of thinking about the sources of deviant behavior to assume that this orientation is accepted in the same degree or to the same extent among all subgroups in the various social classes. It is only that through formal education and informal socialization, in the public communications which come to the attention of members of our society, there is, comparatively speaking, a heavy accent on the notion of success to which all have a moral right.

Historically, this is a fairly unusual circumstance. There are, to my limited knowledge, relatively few societies in history which have

[8] Merton, Robert K.: Social Theory and Social Structure, Chicago: The Free Press, 1949. 423 pp. (Chapter IV).

in principle enjoined the same over-riding values of success upon the members of a society, irrespective of their social origins. The emphasis upon this set of culture goals is imperfectly integrated with the organization of our society, which, as a matter of objective and generally recognizable fact, does not provide equal access to those goals for all members of the society. On the contrary, there are heavily graded degrees of access to this, in terms not only of class and ethnic origins, but also in terms of less immediately visible differentials.

Given the composite emphasis of this uniform cultural value of success being enjoined upon all irrespective of origins, and given the fact of a social organization which entails differentials in the availability of this goal, pressure is exerted upon certain classes of individuals to engage in deviant behavior, particularly those classes or strata or groups which have the least direct access to the goal.

I shall not reproduce the further development of the theme at this time. One objective of the paper is to point out how this malintegration of social and cultural structure leads to *anomie.*

Resurrecting the term *anomie* from the 16th century and putting it to sociological use at the turn of the 20th century, Durkheim was referring to a condition of relative normlessness in a group. Durkheim did not provide good directives to the various signs of *anomie,* to the observables of normlessness. Rather than considering its sources, he devoted his attention very largely to the consequences of *anomie.* That tendency has persisted almost to the present day among many of us who try to follow in Durkheim's very large footsteps. There is little in social science by way of attempts to account for variations in the degree of *anomie,* but there is a growing utilization of the idea in terms of its social and psychological consequences.

In the paper to which I have referred I developed the hypothesis that *anomie* arises in part from the malintegration of a cultural emphasis and the underlying social organization. There is little doubt that even if that proposition continues to be confirmed, it must be supplemented by consideration of others patterned sources of high degrees of *anomie.*

I have now suggested three general points: First, that it is useful, perhaps essential, to reexamine prevailing concepts of social environment if these are to be part of a theory of deviant behavior. Second, that we need to devote some hard attention to the concept of "juvenile delinquency" and to identify distinctive types of deviant behaviors and characters (if we are to avoid the equivalent of a Benjamin Rush theory of disease). Third, that the sources, and not only the social consequences, of *anomie* require detailed study.

I want, now, to raise one further question: to what extent and for which purposes is it feasible to make use of existing data in the

study of deviant behavior? By existing data I mean the data which the machinery of a society makes available—census data, delinquency rates as recorded in official or unofficial sources, data on the income distribution of an area, on the state of housing in an area, and the like. We sociologists have tended to make a practice of redefining our concepts so that these available data can be taken as indices of our concepts, rather than to acknowledge the brutal, hard fact with which we must cope—that often the data which are at hand on a large scale happen not to be the data which are needed. I have the impression that this may be very much the case in the particular field of inquiry with which our meeting is concerned.

There is little in the history of how statistical series on the incidence of juvenile delinquency came to be collected that shows them to be the result of efforts to identify either the sources or the contexts of juvenile delinquency. These are social bookkeeping data. And it would be a happy coincidence if some of them turned out to be in a form relevant for research.

From the sociological standpoint, "juvenile delinquency" and what it encompasses is a form of deviant behavior for which the epidemiological data, as it were, may not be at hand. You may have to go out and collect your own appropriately organized data rather than take those which are ready-made by governmental and other agencies.

Let's take an obvious point. Criminologists attest the notorious inadequacy of official crime statistics. Successive layers of error intervene between the actual event and the recorded event, between the actual rates of deviant behavior and the records of deviant behavior. This raises large questions about the utilization of such statistics, since they are known at the outset to be seriously deficient. They may easily lead to spurious findings about the relations of deviant behavior to social contexts.

Let me illustrate that concretely. You may remember the little paper entitled "Our Law-abiding Law-breakers" published some 8 or 10 years ago by James S. Wallerstein and Clement J. Wyle.[9] Inquiry was made, as I recall, of some 1,500 "law-abiding" men and women, largely overweighted with those of substantial standing in their local communities, particularly professional and business men. Assured of complete anonymity, these people freely admitted to a considerable array of "delinquent" and "criminal" acts. Over 90 per-

[9] *Probation* 25: 107–112 (Mar.-Apr. 1947). This followed out the pattern set in an earlier paper by A. L. Porterfield, "Delinquency and Its Outcome in Court and College," *American Journal of Sociology* 49: 199–208 (Nov. 1943), in which it was found that the average number of offenses acknowledged by a sample of college men outran that found among boys haled into juvenile court, although the college men had rarely appeared in any official statistics of "delinquent" behavior.

cent of these individuals confessed to having committed offenses under existing law—and this did not refer to blue laws or obsolete laws dredged up for the occasion, but to the laws currently being "enforced." Two-thirds of them had engaged in deviant behavior which under the laws of New York were felonies, involving loss of the rights of citizenship.

The implications of findings of this sort have much to do with what Dr. Erikson has been discussing and with what I hope to have an occasion to discuss as we proceed—namely, that the definitions of deviant behavior which the community introduces and applies are quite differently applied to different groups and strata in the population. And the point at which a community applies a definition—be it that of a delinquent or a criminal or a prodigy—crucially affects the self-definition or self-image of the individual engaging in the behavior. The same action may be defined as a technically allowable departure from overly exacting rules or as an expression of a deviant social type that is tagged as delinquent or criminal.

All this also indicates that if these deviant acts do in fact turn up in strata of society where those who perform them are unlikely to be tagged as juvenile delinquents or as criminals, then the forces making for deviant behavior are by no means confined to those strata where these acts are likely to become part of the public record. We lose sight of this as long as we confine our inquiries to officially available statistics on officially defined delicts of one sort or another.

Well, that is in substance all I want to say by way of preview. I have tried to raise a number of general questions. I know that little of what I have said so far has direct bearing on what Dr. Erikson has said so far, but I am hopeful that the two stories will turn out not to be wholly unrelated.

Mr. REDL: My first reaction is to say hurray to most of your statements, especially those which bear on the bad habit of using a term like delinquency as the word bellyache is used—without differentiating whether it is appendicitis or comes from too much ice cream—and then thinking a theory can be built around it. We are all in full agreement with you about that.

But I think you dangled before us the one thing we are so desperate for, namely, a breakdown of cultural norms and social organization in terms specific enough to make clear how and where they impinge on the individual. This is what we are very hungry for, and we would like you to go back to it, if you will.

Mr. MERTON: One way of thinking about norms in a group is that they fall into one of the four "P's": prescribed, proscribed, permitted, or preferred behavior. These are graduations of normative expectancies.

If, on the cultural plane, emphasis is placed, for example, on continued postponement of taking on an adult role (in the sense that it is not only a fact that an occupational role is taken on later in some social strata than in others, but a culturally enjoined fact) then the effect of that cultural mandate on the individual will differ considerably depending on whether or not it is peculiar to the group of which he is a part and is at odds with mandates in other groups, or vice versa. A pattern such as deferred gratification—which is a perfectly legitimate category to apply to individuals under observation—has quite distinct consequences, depending on whether one is or is not a member of a group in which the pattern is not only legitimate but prescribed.

The psychological categories which can be properly utilized in describing the behavior of individuals can at one and the same time be located in terms of their statistical frequency and in terms of their cultural acceptability. Yet this consideration can be easily overlooked. For instance, postponed gratification may be regarded as belonging solely in the psychological category of impulse renunciation. Sociologically, it cannot be assumed, however, that such renunciation will have the same consequences for the individual, irrespective of whether these impulses are generically being renounced within the group of which he is a part or in a group to which he is seeking access, or whether renunciation is atypical in both.

This part-for-part parallelism between thinking about the describable activities of individuals in terms of psychological categories, the statistical frequency of these activities in various groups, and the extent to which they are or are not culturally mandatory would represent one way of bringing the larger cultural structure into the picture of the behavior of individuals.

Dr. NEUBAUER: Could you go a step further and review for us a frame of reference which would permit us to remain close to the understanding of idiosyncratic individual behavior and at the same time to view it from the standpoint of distant forces that influence it?

You referred to Durkheim's concept of *anomie.* I am interested in its usefulness as a source of criteria which would enable us to distinguish between those situations in which we would expect to see variations in behavior which lie within the range of the normal and those which would stack up as social pathology.

This morning Erikson outlined certain concepts which would provide both perspective on normal psychosocial behavior and background for the study of deviations within it. For example, ego identity and ego diffusion characterize both normal behavior and deviant behavior. Now the very stimulating concepts that you outline seem to be open to similar use. And one would wish also to be able to say which constellations within them permit functioning within a normal

range and which do not.   For it is certainly true that if one looks at the individual life history of delinquents one finds a good number of deviations in almost every case.   But clinically we must ask ourselves to what degree these deviations are to be attributed to the specific and defined social context within which they occur.   Are there criteria which would permit us to differentiate the deviant points in the pattern of cultural-social-individual tension?

Mr. MERTON: To the extent that I am prepared to talk to that at all, I must do so with a preamble. The provisional decisions that the psychologist makes regarding the range of behavior of individuals which can be thought of as within the "normal range" and those variations which it is convenient to think of as "abnormal" are related, I suppose, to the further assumption that the "abnormal" variations have more disorganizing consequences for the psychological stability of the individual than those which are contained within the normal range of variation.

Precisely the same formal mode of thinking, I believe, is involved, in the standpoint of the sociologist.   It is not necessarily the range of behavior that is statistically most frequent that is designated as the "normal," although it may empirically turn out to be so.   Nor is it necessarily those behaviors which the culture defines as normal which would correspond to the observer's conception of the "normal." Rather, the sociologist regards those behaviors as normal that do not make for certain kinds of instability in the social system, in precisely the same way as the psychologist regards those as normal which do not make for certain kinds of instability in the individual.

I cannot too much emphasize the notion of kinds of deviation.   The criteria to be applied are not criteria of relative frequency or absolute standards, but criteria phrased in terms of designated consequences for some designated system.

Mr. LANDER: Dr. Merton, would you possibly accept an additional component?   There is another distinction which may make a contribution to this approach.   It may be an over-simplification.   It is a distinction which was made not by a criminologist but by a Rabbinical scholar who happened to be discussing the problem of crime in one of his chronicles.   He made this point, which is simple but may have meaning beyond its simplicity: a thief is not an individual who has stolen, but a person who continues to steal.   In the same sense, a felon is not a person who has committed a felony, but a person who continuously commits felonies.

As Porterfield [19] and others have found, most individuals have committed thefts at one time or another.   Yet they are not thieves because

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[19] *American Journal of Sociology.*   49: 199–208.   (Nov. 1943.)

thievery is not part of their personality organization. They are different from the individuals among whom stealing is part of their normative internal structure and their habitual patterns of living. This difference would be very significant in distinguishing between the kind of individuals whom we define as delinquents or criminals and whose behavior we want to study etiologically and those individuals who have committed felonies but still could not be called delinquent or criminal.

Mr. MERTON: There is easy visibility of the individual, this creature encased in a skin, and an easy possibility of assigning to the individual something you may decide to call life-organization. That is to say, this corresponds to our categories of perception as laymen and as social scientists. Now consider the two types of cases to which you referred: the individuals with a life-organization such that they only rarely engage in these deviations and the others who do so with some regularity. Both of these types of life-organization are part of concrete situations involving interaction between those individuals and representatives of the community. If in both cases the initial acts are experienced and described by others as felonies, that in turn will have its impact on the subsequent life-organization. But abstracting the life-organization as though it were wholly assignable to the individual, apart from what the community defines as the character of that individual, is just the kind of separation that seems to me a questionable one. If the descriptive account of life-organization includes the responses of those with whom the individual is interacting, well and good. But I don't think of these as character types or personality types wholly unrelated to the responses of others to their behaviors.

Mr. LANDER: The implications relate to the importance of statistics that establish differences between groups and differences between neighborhoods. In a doctoral dissertation at Columbia, Robison [11] questioned whether delinquency can be measured. She called attention to administrative differences from area to area and to other factors that interfere with the keeping of valid statistics.

Stouffer responded [12] that the purpose of statistics is not to measure the absolute number of cases of delinquency or crime, but rather to establish a measure of the difference between areas in terms of concentration. Even though statistics may not be effective in establishing the absolute volume in both areas, they do reflect a difference of concentration, especially in terms of individuals who are defined as

[11] Robison, Sophia M.: Can Delinquency Be Measured? New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1936. 277 pp.

[12] *American Journal of Sociology.* 42: 586–590. (Sept. 1936.)

criminals and delinquents by their communities. In a way Stouffer's remarks may be interpreted in relation to what Erik Erikson spoke of this morning—the definition of the individual by the community. And I believe it has tremendous meaning.

For example, compare the rate of crime among Chinese with the rate of crime among non-Chinese people in similar situations. Undoubtedly not all Chinese crime is recorded. Nevertheless, the very difference in the amount of identifiable crime reflected in statistics, the very difference in terms of what the Chinese community has defined as criminal, provides tremendous clues for an explanation of crime along the lines of your approach in *anomie*. It indicates the difference between the stability of the Chinese family and the instability of the community or of the social organization of other contiguous groups with higher delinquency or crime rates.

Mr. MERTON: Well, you notice, Dr. Lander, that you include in your latter statement, with which I completely agree, the notion that you have independent observations of the nature of the Chinese social organization. This indicates that there are definitions which are shared, controls which operate, and the like.

My remarks were directed to the cases in which the materials bearing on social organization are taken for granted as a matter of common sense. "Everyone knows" that the Chinese family structure involves a certain authority system, whereas the statistical data on delinquency are matters to be gathered. If you have parallel operations, dealing both with data about organization and with the activities of members of the group, then I would have no question.

Mr. CHEIN: I have been impressed by a certain amount of parallelism between your analysis and some reflections of Karen Horney on what she described as the role of culture in neurosis.[13] Specifically she refers to a number of conflicts—first, the conflict between brotherly love on the one hand and the norm of competitiveness and success on the other; second, the conflict between the norm of success and the objective danger of failure; and third, the conflict between the stimulation of desires through such things as advertising, conspicuous consumption, and whatnot, on the one hand, and the failure to provide means of satisfying those desires, on the other.

Now, in certain ways her analysis is less sophisticated than yours; for instance, she does not distinguish between culture and social organization. And yet I wonder whether there is not in her very lack of sophistication a certain amount of illumination, in that in effect the very thing you stress as one source of *anomie* (the inadequate bal-

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[13] See, for example, Horney, Karen: The Neurotic Personality of Our Time, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1937. 299 pp. (Chapter 15.)

ance between the culture and the supporting social structure) is not itself seen then as a breakdown in the normative structure of society. That is, there is a certain kind of inappropriateness, ineptness, in the norm of success or in the norm of satisfying all kinds of needs— stimulating the urge to drive a Cadillac without providing the means. So that the very inappropriateness of the norm is itself a reflection of a state of *anomie*—perhaps in a somewhat special form, but none-theless it already exists.

When I think of it in these terms, then it seems to me there is a considerable rapprochement between your analysis and Erikson's analysis. There is breakdown in the normative structure of society and failure to provide a stable place for the individual. On the one side he is being pushed, and on the other side there is a gulf, or he is being mangled betwixt and between two conflicting norms. This creates a basic condition for inability to form a stable and meaning-ful sense of identity and for everything that follows on that.

It seems to me that, seen in these terms, there is a very close relation-ship between your respective analyses.

Mr. MERTON: I rather assume that we want to build a bridge between what I understand Dr. Erikson has been developing and this effort to describe forces at work in the environment which produce a setting in which one or another of the patterns of behavior and character types are likely to emerge.

One important respect in which I think it might be useful to dis-tinguish what I have been trying to say from what Dr. Horney has put forward is precisely on the matter of *patterned differentials in exposure to these environmental pressures, depending on the loca-tion of individuals in the society.* Horney had no working scheme of social structure, but focussed on forces at work in the culture at large.

Mr. CHEIN: Except that she noted without elaboration that individ-uals differ in the degree to which they are in a conflict situation.

Mr. MERTON: But you see that is not a matter of the individual hap-pening to be there. It is the patterned exposure which is the psycho-logical correlate of social structure. Individuals in various groups are consistently more exposed to this discrepancy between what the culture enjoins and access to institutional avenues for meeting those requirements.

A second point which would distinguish the two approaches: Horney deals primarily and usefully with the *responses of individ-uals* to socially induced pressure situations whereas the sociologist is concerned also with *the effects these situations have on the nor-mative structure itself.* The breakdown of institutional ways of

reaching out to achieve culturally valued objectives occurs within a system; it affects not only the individuals who first engage in deviant behavior, but also the other individuals in the social system. Growth of patterns of "illicit success" may progressively enlarge the degree of *anomie* in society so that others, who did not at first respond by personal deviant behavior to the initially low degree of *anomie,* may become liable to deviance as *anomie* is accentuated, this in turn creating an anomic situation for still others. The structural consequences of increasing rates of deviant behavior are part of social dynamics. The increasing frequency in certain groups and areas of departures from institutional norms reduces, if it does not eliminate, the legitimacy of those institutional norms for still others. This is a continuing social process viewed within a social system.

Now, this way of thinking about social dynamics as distinct from psychological dynamics is not part of Horney's approach. It is not that the two standpoints are at odds; they are complementary. But it is useful to think of varying rates of deviant behavor from the perspective of social process, and not only as a situation which the individuals confront. Individuals' responses in turn enter into the social process to reshape the environment for others.

I hope that Dick Cloward can present some of his material later on in our discussion. He observed this sort of thing taking place in an Army prison community. The crucial question is: how do norms progressively deteriorate so that more and more individuals are likely to depart from the norms and become deviants?

If I may say a word about this, a start on this is provided by what the group of Chicago sociologists headed by Clifford Shaw contributed to this subject a generation ago. First, they made the observation—now taken largely for granted, but a startling one at the time—that the greater part of deviant behavior is not that of individuals privately engaging in highly secretive deviations unknown to others, but is a group phenomenon, a shared deviation. The phenomenon of group support of deviation is really implied in the early Chicago studies.

Now, once you have a "delinquency subculture," or a delinquency group with a culture all its own, then there is, it seems to me, relatively little problematic about the fact that incoming members of the community are likely to become delinquents, that they conform to their own subculture. There is, so to say, no special theory needed to account for continued, renewed, and elaborated deviant behavior by those who come into a subculture which is defined as deviant. But we do want to know how these delinquency subcultures originate, crystallize, develop, and grow so that they become self-perpetuating and self-sustaining. It seems to me necessary to develop a theory about the breakdowns of norms which then crystallize about new sets of standards which the larger community defines as deviant.

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I don't know if this speaks to your remark, but that would be one direction in which this line of analysis moves that differs from that which Horney's approach leads to.

Mr. CHEIN: I had another question. The concept of **anomie** is always defined in terms of normlessness, but it seems to me that whenever I hear or see it discussed it actually has another concept behind it, a concept of breakdown in human relations and mutual support. And I wonder whether this more latent concept of **anomie** (whether etymologically the word is still appropriate is debatable) isn't really more relevant than the concept of the breakdown of norms. It is precisely the fact that delinquency, let us say, and many other forms of social deviations, are not deviations at all but reflect the emergence of a new norm that would seem to make the normlessness concept really beside the point. But if the significant emphasis is on the breakdown in interpersonal relations and in mutual supports and things of that order, then the **anomie** concept seems to be entirely appropriate, regardless of whether a new norm, antisocial in character, has emerged.

Mr. MERTON: Once again, I think you have caught hold of something that might be very fruitful for us to go on with.

We can ask ourselves whether it is useful or needful in dealing with any observed piece of human behavior to observe that behavior in at least three aspects—1, the social structural; 2, the cultural or normative; and 3, whatever the appropriate terms would be—"personality" perhaps.

What you have said would be very much in line with the direction of my own thinking. The term **anomie** has historically referred to the progressive breakdown of norms. It then becomes important to ask: given a state of relative breakdown in the shared standards of a group (the cultural or normative aspect), what is the impact on further social relations between the members of the group who are experiencing this normative breakdown? Do social relations become charged with mutual distrust? Or does one observe progressive social isolation as a phase response to normlessness?

Correlatively, you may start with social structure and ask under what types of structural conditions do you have a situation which will tend to make for the breakdown of norms? That, too, is a pertinent question, and there has been some inquiry into it. But if you don't make the conceptual distinction, then these questions will probably not become apparent.

If we attempt to relate Dr. Erikson's thinking on identity and, for that matter, on the psychosocial moratorium, it will be useful to do so with regard to each of the three aspects of the same events: the structural, the cultural, and that of the individual personality.

So I think of the concept of **anomie** as bridging social and psychological dynamics. **Anomie** and a loss of orientation on the part of a substantial number of members of the group may lead to reintegration around new norms, whether those are called deviant or otherwise, and a shift from relative breakdown and social isolation, which is found intolerable, to reintegration in a new group. **Anomie** is thought of as a phase between the two. If we ask, is it of more interest to focus only on the social relations or only on the norms, then this kind of interaction between the two gets lost to sight. And to my way of thinking, Horney was primarily engaged in examining the relations between the cultural and the personal. Many others have been engaged in examining the relations between the social and the personal, without making a systematic examination of the distinctive cultural mandates of different classes.

In short, I think you have caught up one of the important themes in our discussion.

Mr. GOULD: I was wondering if a unit that would span all the concepts that we have before us—the cultural, the social, and personality (I would call that last the "individual")—and that would help us in our understanding of delinquency would be the family. The family is a social structure, modified by the culture, which I think we all agree has a marked effect on the development of the individual.

The thesis has been presented that family dynamics are changing due to the impact of the culture in the United States; the roles of the father and of the mother are changing. If we accept that and tie in what Erikson has presented, we can expect definite effects on identity formation for the children.

As far as the literature I am familiar with goes, no use has been made of the family as a unit for research in this particular area—research which takes account of both psychological factors in the family and its cultural relationships.

I would like to make another point now on the question of the variables that we have used and the meaningfulness and worth-while-ness of using census data, government statistics, on delinquency. It is my impression that the use of such data has been an accident. They have been used because they existed, and not because it was thought that they were really meaningful in terms of the problem. And we are running into the same thing in behavioral science, counting and using what is countable and avoiding that which we have difficulty in measuring. The result is that sometimes we pick up variables and try to tie them into the problem by a real stretch of the imagination. Delinquency, I think, like education and socio-economic status, correlates with almost every nonsocial variable that one can think of. And you can use elaborate statistical techniques and make that correlation go up or down, depending on the direction you take.

I think we have to come back to a theoretical construct and to try to measure what may be difficult to measure but what has meaning for the problem in terms of the theoretical construct.

Mr. MERTON: I don't know if this is to the point of your remark, but I hope it is. Let me illustrate the kind of thing I have in mind by considering how one might think about this "action at a distance" from the larger social structure to the behavior of the particular individual under examination. It will have great simplicity and great familiarity, but let me say it nevertheless.

Take as a point of departure the familiar fact that within recent years an appreciable proportion of young men in American society know that they are going into the Army for a term of years. This is an historical fact. One could then attempt to account for this shift in the role of young American men and go into still other sectors of history and sociology. But let us arbitrarily start with this historical fact. Then, from where I stand, one of the relevant considerations is whether this in turn provides a new context for family units. This is a new part of the **environment** for establishing family units. And now we ask: is this not something that they encountered before, reflected in terms of new patterned expectations, say, regarding age of marriage?

Now, we know that statistics show a decline in age at first marriage. Can this new, empirically demonstrable pattern, this shift, be conceptualized as a **cultural** response to a designated change in the larger social structure (i. e., universal draft)? Does the **fact** of early marriage become a new **expectancy** of early marriage, and is the growing cultural acceptability of this a redefinition which has been a cultural response to the shift in the larger organization?

Any number of other dynamic elements might in fact be involved. I speak out of ignorance. It may be that there has been a marked cultural redefinition in some social strata, particularly in those where there is the wherewithal to provide for early marriage and still maintain other cultural standards that a family in the group is expected to maintain. In other strata there may have been a shift in the cultural expectancy (for instance, to marry at 18 rather than at 20 may have become the morally acceptable thing to do) but early marriage may still be infrequent because the wherewithal for living up to still other cultural standards is not at hand.

If this is so, adolescents confront basically different stress situations, depending on whether or not they belong to the group in which there has been both a cultural positive change and also the economic base for early marriage without sacrifice of other cultural expectations. And you can run in all the combinations and permutations.

If one does not think in more or less orderly terms about these three classes of factors and their interaction as context for the behavior of individuals, one may conclude only that this individual is under great stress because he feels that if he does not marry now, when he is going to the Army for three years, he has continued postponement of a status which he has defined in his own life organization as appropriate within the next year or two. But the social contexts of such an individual, depending on whether he is in one group or another, may differ radically (at least so it seems to me) and greatly affect both the extent of the pressure and his reactions to that pressure. The contexts which are provided by this change in the largest aspects of the social structure, and through intervening stages to the particular situation which any particular adolescent faces, can be detected only if a systematic effort is made to deal simultaneously or serially with three levels of analysis. That is substantially the only point I was making.

I am unable to respond to your comment on the family as a particularly strategic social unit for dealing simultaneously with the social and cultural phases. For what the family is (what its cultural values are, what its social organization) is a reflection of changes in larger social structures, and not only of the family structure.

This is, as I say, familiar enough to all of us. We happen here to have considered one massive historical change—the Army draft—because it impinges directly on the age group with which we are concerned, the late adolescent. But other changes in the organization of the total society, whether it is suburbanization or extending years of formal education or what-have-you, are also contextual developments to which there are simultaneously cultural responses and organizational responses of the particular units with which we are concerned. And in this sense, when one does field work, one tends to get a fore-shortened view because one focuses on the local community, and the context taken as relevant tends to be the *local* community, not the larger social structure.

My suggestion of simultaneous three-fold analysis is an effort to meet Whitehead's fallacy of simple location. As I understand it, Whitehead questioned the presumption that you can locate everything realistically and usefully at a given time and place. We tend to do just that in much social research, by thinking of the particular individual in his local setting as though the remote total structure had no bearing on him unless we happened to detect it by direct inquiry of him. Looking at the larger social structure as a historian or as, I dare say, a sociologist gives clues to pressures on intervening social units in which the individual does in fact live out his life, in which he is located, but which are continually changing their composition and their character, both culturally and socially. I see it as the office of the field of sociology primarily to attempt to import these considerations into the

study of deviant behavior just as I would see the same kind of elaboration as the office of a psychologist dealing with the structure and dynamics of the psyche.

Miss WITMER: I am reminded here of how Erikson used history in his book, **_Childhood and Society._** Wasn't history one of your main variables, Erik?

Mr. ERIKSON: May I make two remarks? I had difficulty following at first, because I think more in historical terms than, shall we say, in terms of structure.

First, as to history. Instead of Army service, let me take early marriage as something that has come to be institutionalized. I am especially interested in it because that is one of the things I could not possibly have foreseen when, twelve years ago, I wrote up some biographies of California children and made some kind of vague predictions as to what might happen to them. Early marriages are possible now, and many of these children have married much, much earlier than could have been predicted. I think by the age of 22 about 90 percent of the girls were married—very much earlier than their parents.

Looking at these children's histories one can see that from now on one should ask not so much who has married and when, but who has been divorced. To put that in the terms I used this morning, it is pretty clear that today many late adolescents, especially girls, escape their identity conflicts by marrying too early, before they are ready. This morning I said that, without some establishment of a firm sense of identity, what we call sexual maturity is not possible—for the simple reason that you cannot lose yourself in another person before you have something to lose, before you are firm enough in yourself so that you don't feel that your ego is damaged every time you lose yourself in another person. So that I would almost say, defending the terms used this morning, that early marriage has now become to some extent a moratorium for girls.

In this way, I think what Merton has said and what I have said could be brought together, in the sense that one has first to understand the life cycle, the stages of the life cycle, and then to survey how changing history is related to it—very much in the way motion is dealt with in the theory of relativity.

Second, about normlessness. I don't understand it yet, but I would like to ask something. What Karen Horney very meaningfully pointed out is the stress under which everybody in our kind of culture labors. And I would think that in any culture there would be certain inner contradictions among norms that would have to be reconciled. It is, in fact, the job of the culture, as it is the job of the individual ego, to reconcile things, such as love and success, desire and

frustration—in fact, desire provoked by the culture and the inability to fulfill it.

Now, if you speak of normlessness in American society in a historical way, you can see different norms at different times in the individual life cycle. Children are not aware of the different norms that they will meet later on as adolescents or in their adulthood.

Actually it seems to me that much in American life was more norm-less in the past than nowadays. In fact I would almost say the break-down of normlessness is becoming a problem. Is this so? That is the question I would like to ask. In a sense many American kids no longer know where they are because everything has become so stand-ardized, normalized, investigated, formulated, and there is no longer any way of being normless.

What is now described as gangsterism in Chicago has certainly existed for a long time. But it used to be accepted as the norm—cer-tainly out in the west, in California. Men who, if they were caught, would certainly be called criminals today, are still considered historical models: most of the great railroad builders, not to speak of the desper-adoes or the vigilantes. Our children still see the conduct of such people in the movies as a norm.

I wish you would discuss the particular implication of all this for America from the point of view of disintegrating norms.

Mr. MERTON: I may be suffering the penalties of finding it uncongenial to repeat orally what I have put into writing. Some of us have a sentiment to the effect that once you have got something down in print, it has entered the public domain and should be put to one side by the author. The result of that irrational behavior on my part has been that I have been needlessly elliptical, circuitous, and obscure.

In the paper I referred to earlier,[14] I attempted to identify points in the social structure at which a relatively high degree of *anomie* might develop. I tried to locate those structural places in American society where the contradictions between the cultural values enjoined on people in those niches and the possibilities of living up to those values were at a maximum. Thinking of this as a social topography of *anomie,* where would you expect to find concentrations of *anomie* in American society? This is quite different from (a) the statement that American society is uniformly riddled with *anomie,* or (b) that *anomie* is the dominating characteristic of American society. That is to say, the purpose of this formulation is to put to one side socially acceptable conformity, whether this be in the best interests of the development of the human being or not, by identifying the structural places where a rough approximation between what is expected of you

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[14] Merton, Robert K.: "Social Structures and Anomie," op. cit.: Chapter IV.

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and demanded of you and the patterned possibility of living up to those expectations are most common.

Now let's look at structural situations in which there is greater difficulty in living up to those normative requirements. And further, let's look at types of adaptations to contradiction between norms on the one hand and the patterned social situations on the other. Just as it is a relevant question to ask what produces varying degrees of *anomie* in different sectors of society, so it is relevant to inquire further into the varying adaptations to *anomie,* the types of adaptation, which can be distinguished. To locate types of adaptation sociologically and not in terms of deep psychological analysis, it is convenient, I suggest, to think of institutional goals on the one hand (the objectives which significant others are reaffirming for you), and of institutional means or avenues for reaching out for those goals, on the other. Both are regulated and controlled. The group to which I paid little attention in this paper is comprised of the conformists who more or less approximate living up to both the goals and the means.

Pressures toward deviant behavior can now be located sociologically. Those persons who maintain the culturally validated objectives but, for social structural reasons which I attempted to indicate, are less likely to be able to approximate them have a greater tendency to engage in a type of adaptation which I designate by the neutral term "innovation," without prejudging whether it will be a socially valued innovation or a socially devalued innovation, such as delinquency or crime.

In the same way, those who have abandoned their goal under socially induced stress but still conform to the routinized requirements of their status, I identified as engaging in "ritualistic adaptation." Another type of deviant response I described as "retreatist," since it involves abandoning both institutionalized goals and means.

To introduce a sociologically dynamic perspective, I suggest that a response to these disjointed pressures can involve a rejection of the original institutional goals and the introduction of new ones. This is the point that Dr. Chein was making earlier. In such a response, a new set of norms is shared by the group, there is no longer an *anomie* situation but rather a new integration. This conception does not take overt conformity to the conventional standards as a desideratum; it identifies different types of stress situations that are socially patterned and shows how the responses to these stresses might result in a shift in the cultural structure.

I don't know if this speaks to your point. But I would suppose two things. One, that simply in terms of relative frequency, the prevailing situation in American society, as to some degree in every other society, is not one of normlessness but one of contradictory norms that nevertheless are sufficiently compatible so that the people in that

society living under stress can make some sort of adaptation, even though at the personal price of suffering and distress.

I cannot answer the further question as to how the historian might go about arriving at an opinion on whether American society in 1950 has larger and more numerous pockets of **anomie** than it had in 1900. As often with history, interesting questions may be forever closed to adequate answers because the tattered evidence which has been left to us by the rats who have gnawed at the documents in the archives, and the loss of pertinent documents, and the undeveloped state of the social sciences at the time when the relevant data were not collected preclude us from making significant comparisons historically on some points. With regard to **anomie,** I am not at all prepared to say that there has been a rise or a decline. My attempt has been to locate **anomie,** if you will, in terms of social topography rather than through time.

Dr. NEUBAUER: As I tried to translate this material into the clinical theory, which comes from study of either pathological or normal behavior, these ideas came to mind.

In trying to understand the present-day functioning of a human being, we clinicians have not learned to look for direct and specific external components and factors. When we try to understand an individual, we think we must move genetically, into his history. It is very difficult for us to see a neurosis, for example, as a direct reflection of social structure and pressure groups and tensions. We have to add another dimension.

Perhaps we should go back to the historical component about which Erikson spoke this morning and note that we have to add two additional factors to the internal condition of the individual and to the external factors, either cultural or social, we have been talking about. To explain an individual's conduct, all these factors must be related.

The first factor is early development, and the variety of conflicts which come out of it. The personality is formed early. Later on, the individual meets conditions which he was not prepared to find or which were not among those which formed him. Out of this come clashes, either because he is not able to withstand conditions for which he was not prepared or because what now happens interferes with his form of adaptation. He tries to change external conditions; he is changed by external conditions. There follows a sequence of events which leads to revised social-cultural values, to forms of adaptation and reaction. In terms of life history, these clashes pass from one generation to another; one generation imposes its own upon the next and so on into the future.

The second additional factor I think inheres in the category of developmental phases. The individual meets external conditions on the basis of certain constellations of his own development which are specific and which make him more or less prepared to meet one set of

conditions or another. We know a little bit about these constellations today, which naturally makes the whole study of interactions more complicated. Whatever the social conditions, whether they are characterized by more or less **anomie,** the situation is different for the 3-year-old and for the 15-year-old and for the adult. And **anomie** itself is not directly mirrored, as Merton has pointed out. There are very special points of focal interchange and translation about which we know more in some areas and in others less.

Now, unless we include at least these two additional factors it is very difficult for me to think clearly about delinquency, for instance. In fact, to the concept presented by Dr. Merton, I would be inclined to add even more forms and factors, to make the concept translatable into clinical terms. This does not in any way speak against the broad conception, but rather suggests adding several points in order to round it out.

Mr. MERTON: I am grateful for your remarks, because you have said something that needed to be said. After having abruptly drawn distinctions between the endo-psychic and the social and the cultural, and having done so provisionally to simplify the matter, I should now like to remove these distinctions, at least in one basic respect.

Under the loose generic category of social structure, the sociologist and his associates think in terms of the position of individuals within a structure. Whether these positions are called status or role is, for the moment, unimportant. But the decisive aspect of the sociologist's conception of roles is that they are not merely self-definitions by the individual who **happens** to assign himself a given role; they are also definitions which are variously shared by others with whom the individual is in direct contact and with still others with whom he is not. That is to say, social roles are those which are socially validated and legitimized. There are in addition idiosyncratic self-definitions which may or may not coincide with the socially established roles.

Now, to take your point about what happens when one introduces a time dimension into structural categories of this sort. The definitions which can be empirically shown to prevail in a particular group regarding the role of the 15-year-old in various sectors of his daily life, for example, are obtained not merely from the 15-year-old that one is looking at, not merely from other 15-year-olds, but from the definitions of roles of everyone else in what might be called the role-set of the individual one is observing, namely, the set of persons with whom he is in sustained interaction in this role. His role-set may include age mates, parents, siblings of older or younger years, and his school teacher. From the sociological standpoint, it is of course extremely important to determine the respects in which there is consensus among those in the individual's role-set about appropriate

role-behaviors and attitudes for a 15-year-old, and the respects in which they divide in patterned ways.

This breakdown into roles, whether these be age roles or occupational roles or class roles, is not, to my way of thinking, something "outside" in contrast to the self-definitions of the individual occupying the status, but is an integral part of how he happens to acquire his self-definitions.

Looking at the time-element in still another way, not in terms of an individual moving through his life-cycle but in terms of the "life-cycle of the society," we become aware that the prevailing role definition for a 15-year-old, to stay with this example, looks identifiably different in 1910 from what it was in 1930, and so on. This presents the sociologist with quite another kind of problem: how did this social change in role-definition come about? This may be of somewhat less interest to the clinician, although he will want to be clear that the role-definitions for the young adolescent have been changed in designated respects. For both the sociologist and the clinician it is important to consider that there may be quite different problems of adaptation for those occupying the status of a 15-year-old in 1910 and in 1950.

All this merely alludes to the contention that in such a notion as role or in the very powerful notion that Erik Erikson is developing of identity or of self, the provisional distinction between the exoteric and the esoteric, between the inside and the outside, is only a manner of speech. Self-definitions are, in ways that the clinicians have to identify for us, interactive with the prevailing definitions of those around the individual, and those prevailing definitions in turn are derivative from changes in the larger social structure which were previously described as historical.

Whenever one talks in these generalities, the problem seems disarmingly simple; but it must also be said that if one never talks in terms of these generalities, the problems don't even emerge.

Mr. ERIKSON: Yes, the clinician has to know these things.

Let's take some simple facts. Parents are blamed for what happens. Everywhere there is discussion of whether parents are to blame or are not to blame. Now, the fact that the parents were alive in 1910 (in other words, that they had a concept of a 15-year-old when they were 15 years old, and that at the same time their parents had a still more obsolete concept of a 15-year-old) is not something that the clinician should disregard. But this is a point for future discussion. We haven't mentioned parents at all yet. The family was mentioned as a unit. But the relationship of the family to the community should still be taken up.

I would like to add one or two points I did not make this morning, even though they have little or nothing to do with what Dr. Merton has

been talking about. One is about the need on the part of young people for emancipation from their parents and the great difficulty of emancipating oneself from an authority that is badly defined. That again may be part of the normlessness we are speaking of. I don't know whether it is or not. It is not just that parents have changed; it is that parents are insecure. To use Reisman's terms, "inner-directed" parents feel rather lost nowadays; they cannot even state their case any more, or they overstate it so that they separate themselves from their own children. "Other-directed" parents, in contrast, are so other-directed that they constantly ask what the experts say, what the **Ladies Home Journal** says this week, what other people do. In consequence, what children want to emancipate themselves from, or what they can emancipate themselves from, is highly normless, which is not bearable for them.

Another point relates to what was said about the thief; that the thief is not one who has stolen but one who steals. Something has to be added there about the one who is caught, and about the one who wants to be caught.

I mentioned this morning that I have been reading the papers recently, and I want to remark about the complete naiveté with which some so-called juvenile delinquents leave traces behind and do little acts of what we would call confession-compulsion that are really amazing. I have a whole list at home. For instance, a boy has stabbed somebody, and the next day he is seen on the subway with an open knife in his hand; he just keeps that open knife in his hand until some policeman gets the idea that he must be the one who did the stabbing. Now, that makes is awfully easy for the police. Or that murderer in Springfield. He just hung his bloody suit in his closet. The police looked all over Springfield. But he did not bury the bloody clothes. He just hung them there. I want to suggest that one might check up on this one little item for the light it may throw on motivations.

Mr. MERTON: Your earlier remark has a great deal to do with our group discussion. When you refer to the observable need of children for emancipation from parents, that is the beginning of a suggestive clinical observation. And, as a sociologist, I respond to that with questions of the following supplementary rather than substitute order.

Is there the same intensity of "need" for emancipation from the authority or controls or value schemes of parents on the part of 15-year-olds wherever they are located in American society, or are there patterned differences in the intensity of those needs among adolescents who are found in different niches in the society? For exemplification, what are the class differences in the intensity of such needs? I should be prepared to find that those vary considerably. Parents who, by virtue of their accomplishments or at least their status, are living up to highly valued standards in the society would represent very differ-

ent kinds of social objects for their adolescent children than the parents who have failed to live up to these highly esteemed cultural values. That would lead me to expect not only, as I say, individual differences but patterned group differences in desire for emancipation.

In the same way, if one considers for a moment this notion of the role-set (namely, the complex relationships of individuals in any one role to those involved in a series of connected roles) these too will vary immensely in their significance for the individual depending on his place in the class structure. This we know from observation. For a considerable proportion of those in the lower economic strata, the teacher is a very different kind of person from what he is for middle class children. This is not a "personality attribute" which he "happens" to acquire as "an individual." It can be shown to be more prevalent in one group than in others. The composition of role-sets and their significance to the individual under observation are again matters of structurally patterned variation, providing a context which the clinician has to take into account.

If, on the other hand, one were to think of the need for emancipation, the need for separation of oneself from certain forms of authority and need for orienting oneself to a tradition, as found in particular age-groups irrespective of their role-sets, irrespective of their social location, it seems to me that the actual facts of the case would be likely to be obscured. Once again, moving from social structural location to clinical analysis is precisely the kind of back-and-forth movement that contributes to both modes of analysis.
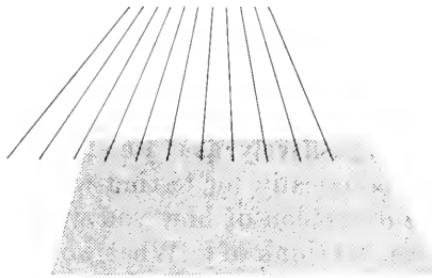
The Individual Delinquent

In the third session the group started what proved to be a premature consideration of what the two main sets of ideas presented so far might mean for research about delinquency. It was soon recognized, however, that while three independent variables (personality, culture, and social structure) had been described, little had been said about the dependent variable that had occasioned the whole discussion—delinquency. This deficiency was remedied by Fritz Redl, who, in an unprepared statement, categorized delinquents in accordance with the areas of the personality that may be affected.

The session ended with Merton and Erikson, on request, making extemporaneous comments on Redl's remarks.

Miss WITMER: I have attempted to draw up a statement that indicates, in small part, how the sets of ideas presented by Erikson and Merton come together in possible explanation of delinquency, or of some delinquencies. I put this forward hesitantly. But since we started out wanting to see how these ideas fit together and what, taken together, they mean for research in delinquent behavior, I thought that some such attempt at a statement might be useful at this point in our discussion.

The formulation is as follows:

> The effects of a cultural situation characterized by normlessness will vary in their manifestations from social class to social class in our society and from individual to individual. In any case, however, such normlessness will add to the difficulties in developing a sound sense of ego identity and make it less likely that the psychosocial moratorium will turn out successfully.

It seemed to me that to put forward a tentative formulation would give us, first of all, something to criticize and enlarge. Then, if we

evolved something reasonably satisfactory to us, we could identify the items that we would have to formulate definitions about, elaborate upon, research into, and so on, before anyone could proceed to studies on the bearing of all this on an explanation of delinquency.

The statement is phrased positively, as if we knew this were so, but it is really put down hypothetically for testing whether it is so. At some point I would like discussion of how you would go about this testing. What studies can we think of? What would be involved in them? What ways of making studies would have some bearing on testing out whether this is true?

Now you are perfectly free to say, "This is all wet. Let's throw it out, and start with something entirely different."

Miss KOTINSKY: Would you want to add to this statement what I can refer to only as the reciprocal relationship? That is, you have got this going one way: normlessness may interfere with the development of a satisfactory sense of ego identity. There was, it seems to me, another stream of thought: that unsatisfactory ego identities, in turn, may contribute to normlessness, or to the establishment of new norms, and that these again may affect delinquency. Do you think that is a strategic addition to consider?

Miss WITMER: That is very good.

Mr. REDL: How does the statement pick up the vast realm of ideas presented, except for the fact that normlessness is different in different classes?

Miss WITMER: The statement is put forward as my notion of where the two realms of ideas come together. I suspect that it will take a lot of classification and elaboration before anything can be done research-wise even with the concept of normlessness.

Mr. KOBRIN: I make the suggestion that this statement be formulated into a study program. If we could do that, I think we would have something more concrete to consider, more readily subject to examination and investigation.

Suppose we were to make this kind of a translation: that a study is needed to determine the variations in identity diffusion in segments of the population that are differentially vulnerable to delinquency. That is to say, we would want to start with the hunch coming out of clinical wisdom, taking that as the central hypothesis, but to take into consideration also the fact that the delinquency is not uniformly distributed throughout the country or throughout the population.

Probably the segments would be social class groups. In order to conduct the investigation, it would then be necessary to get the social-structural and culture-structural coordinates of identity diffusion.

This, it seems to me, would necessarily entail a somewhat concrete characterization of **anomie,** or normlessness, in its bearing on delinquency. Whatever value there may be in the hypothesis of identity diffusion and in the concept of normlessness would be focused directly on the whole issue of delinquency. This process would also serve as a means of examining the elucidating capacities of both concepts.

Miss KOTINSKY: Shall we assume, for the conference, that when we say "delinquency," we mean "delinquencies"—not individual delinquents, but types of delinquencies?

Mr. KOBRIN: I think every term would have to be closely defined.

Mr. ERIKSON: Every term would have to be defined, and it seems important also to show how the concepts used are related to other concepts in each field. In any kind of research, it is of course important that the systematic relationship among concepts be kept in mind and developed.

If the theories are any good, then the inner consistency of the concepts involved in them would serve to show up regularities in the phenomena under study. For those who work practically, it is difficult to see why people like Merton and myself emphasize this so much. We may indeed be a little purist about it, but I think we are at the same time also practical, because science after all is characterized by a systematic relationship among concepts.

Dr. NEUBAUER: I think Miss Witmer's statement could stand if one could make sure that it would not be taken as an encompassing formulation for relevant research. For example, Erikson has spoken about that aspect of the ego which reacts to external demand. I would certainly feel that the other aspects of ego function—for instance, the ego's awareness of its own self—is equally essential in connection with delinquency as a phenomenon of puberty and adolescence. The term ego identity, I am sure, does not cover the totality of ego function, but only that part of it which is related to expectation from the outside.

As long as we are aware of this, it is certainly legitimate to concentrate on this one aspect, and to examine many other very important aspects later or separately.

Mr. MERTON: A footnote to Dr. Neubauer's comment: I think more is required than a simple statement that any tentative formulation like this deals with only a small sector of the total field. Such a statement could easily be interpreted as a pious caution. I personally am always dissatisfied with these general cautions, for they become so conventional as to be often quite empty. I think that what we have just heard indicates that, even though we may elect the present formulation as a center and move out from it, we should also make lists of the

other matters which, for the moment, are not being considered. **Then,** possibly, in the course of the discussion we may be able to import some of the considerations not contained in the present formulation and see how they match with those that are there.

I have one other comment. I would like to register in advance a feeling that I will strenuously object to any attempt to find operational indices of these concepts until we have talked more about the concepts themselves, their components, and their attendant meanings. I think that if one starts thinking at the outset about operational indices, one is likely to find oneself dealing with indices which are unnecessarily vague, and which therefore lead to sidetracking.

I think I am saying in a somewhat different way what Erikson was saying. I would hope that, whatever direction our discussion takes, before turning to indices we will think aloud in a rather uninhibited way about the possible components of ego identity and *anomie.*

Mr. CHEIN: Dr. Neubauer's comment raises another issue. How much of the ego is going to be left out of consideration? In the development of the awareness of self, there are a number of components, one of which has to do with what I call the attributive accretions, characteristics that the individual learns to attribute to himself. But there are also other genetic factors, contemporaneously as important and possibly more central, which do not have an essentially social origin at all, but which have instead a somatic origin.

The sense of self is closely tied up with the body image, and with such things as kinesthetic and cutaneous experiences. And disturbances in the body image will reflect themselves in disturbances in ego identity. In focusing the discussion on the relationship of a sociological concept to a psychoanalytic concept, we tend to see the social side of the picture, but there are a great many consequences—social consequences, in terms of the individual's reaction to what is happening to him socially—to the disturbances in the body image, and all that goes with it. I don't think that we should lose sight of this, or of the potential role that such factors can play in the generation of such psychosocial phenomena as delinquency.

Mr. REDL: Why do we talk about normlessness? It may be lack of norms or it may be decay of norms. Why focus on the one socio-cultural characteristic? Many such defects may produce identity diffusion.

Miss KOTINSKY: "Normlessness" is a translation of *anomie.* In translating into a more common word, we are losing some of the meaning of the original concept—perhaps in part because we don't understand the full meaning of *anomie.*

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Dr. NEUBAUER: I think Redl said more than that. He is suggesting an extension and widening of the alternatives to be considered on the socio-cultural side.

Mr. MERTON: One concept being *anomie,* but that being only one. I would strongly support the suggestion, because if we focus only on the one category we won't get great clarity. We will be foreshortening our observations.

Mr. LANDER: May I suggest that we explore the concepts under consideration in terms of their components. I have a feeling that there may be components of both that are purely complementary.

For example, I have found at least three types of normlessness. In one area the conflicting sets of norms of different ethnic groups gave rise to a lack of external control.

In another area, normlessness arose, not because the norms were conflicting, but because the community was so completely disorganized that there was a complete absence of social consensus.

And then there was a third kind of community, in which there was not a conflict of norms, but a very stable and completely criminal set of norms. The normal form of behavior was to be a criminal. The norms were highly organized, but they were not the accepted norms of society at large.

Now, I see a very strong affinity between these situations and Erikson's concept of ego identity, especially if this concept were broadened a little.

For example, I have proceeded for some time with a kind of hypothesis that delinquency can actually be predicted in terms of an interrelation between social *anomie* and ego *anomie,* and I believe Kobrin has also written about this.

My idea is that, where there are both strong external controls and strong internal controls, there will be little delinquency. On the other hand, when external controls are weak (as, for example, in a so-called delinquency area) and internal controls are also weak (for instance in a child raised in a home where the father is a criminal and the mother a prostitute), the chances that the child will become delinquent are very great.

Or A may be present without B, or B without A. In a community with strong external controls, a particular child may have weak internal controls, or, in the process of adolescence, he may rebel against controls, rebel against society.

Or the situation may be the converse. This was my own experience. I participated in gang activities, but, as a result of strong internal controls, I broke away at an early age.

So, I feel that these two concepts might become a kind of common denominator of research—the concept of *anomie* in its social sense,

and the concept of normlessness in the individual, which reflects either ego-identity diffusion or a criminal or delinquent identity.

Mr. CHEIN: Well, if one introduces the notion of internal controls against external controls, then one has to recognize at least two systems of internal control: the ego system and the superego system. The inter-relationships between these two play an important part in understanding such behaviors as delinquency.

I would also like to comment that one special advantage of the word *anomie* over "normlessness" is that it doesn't have all the connotations that "normlessness" has. I don't think that we would have the difficulty with the word *anomie* that we are having with the word "normlessness." *Anomie* is much more easily expanded to cover the three or four varieties that have been enumerated and does not necessarily connote absence of norms.

Mr. GERSHENSON: Evidently our universe of ideas is rapidly expanding here, and we are taking off into space.

I was wondering whether, in terms of the realistic formulation of concepts that one could hope to test by research, we shouldn't attempt to set up some coordinate system of concepts. Then we could see how this system relates to a second, which we have assumed here, and mentioned only two or three times, namely: the various forms of delinquency. On this latter point, I should like to hear from Fritz Redl.

I think Dr. Merton actually set up the coordinate system yesterday. We have three things operating: the culture, the social structure (or social relations), and a third which he called "personality," and which I would rather call "the individual."

If we think in three dimensions, we can analyze each coordinate into its components. Within the cultural coordinate, one concept would be *anomie;* that would be only one aspect of a total cultural system. One component in the individual coordinate would be ego identity or ego diffusion. The coordinate for the social structure we haven't even talked about yet. Perhaps we should start with these three, list what we have to date, and see what we can add.

Then we could turn to delinquency. I am not clear whether what has been presented is intended to cover all cases of delinquency or a particular set of delinquents. In a recent article [15] Fritz Redl indicated four classes of delinquency. Yesterday I learned that he has since expanded the 4 classes to about 7.

I was wondering whether hearing about these would take us off on another track or would actually give us a clearer focus for our explora-

[15] Redl, Fritz: "Our Troubles with Defiant Youth," *Children* 2:5–9. (Jan.–Feb. 1955.)

tion of the two concepts presented. To what proportion of delinquencies can we see these concepts related? If they cover only a very minor group, is it worth all our effort to develop them? If they cover a major group, then we can proceed.

Mr. REDL: I think that sooner or later we ought to get to types of delinquents. But we are started on an entirely different track now, and we haven't given it enough of a chance. If I talk now, we may spread ourselves too thin and end up with nothing.

Mr. MERTON: I gather that we are trying to develop some workable agenda that we can hope to get through. To me the logical format which we are getting at looks something like this. We have a class of independent variables of various kinds—variables of a social order, of a cultural order, and of an individual order—the outlines of which need to be filled in. But, as was pointed out, except for a few scattered remarks we have not attempted to clarify in the same way the components or elements of the dependent variable, namely delinquency or delinquent types—types of personality that might, metaphorically, be called delinquent.

I would agree with Dr. Redl that by extending our task we won't get over very much of it. But the choice we face is whether to move in a lopsided way, or to move a shorter distance in a more balanced way. For my own learning, I would like to hear Dr. Redl say something out of his experience and thinking by way of conceptualizing the dependent variable. After he has done that, we can seen how much we can move in depth.

Mr. REDL: This is a big topic, and I hope it won't take the conference off on a different track. Still, the dependent variable, delinquency, is something we should talk about a bit.

For years, in trying to understand delinquency, we have poured our main effort primarily in two different directions: First, we have often confined our discussion largely to a descriptive breakdown of the kinds of things delinquents do. Most of the categories used in police, court, and other statistics are of this type. This is like throwing nuts and apples and cigarette lighters into the pot and then counting them—things that are entirely different in their basic nature, and that therefore will never add up. So we obviously don't get anywhere, no matter how many of this type of statistics we compute.

A second approach to the understanding of delinquency has been the etiological one. Here we ask ourselves just what has led up to the disturbance later marked as delinquency, what "caused" it.

There is still another approach, and this is the one I am interested in at the moment. Doctors don't talk only about what produces bellyache or how many people get that disorder. They raise the question: Which part of the organism has something peculiar happening to it?

And what has gone wrong? So it is with delinquency. We ought to ask the question: "What is going on inside this boy's personality when he commits delinquent behavior?" We so often spend time asking what started it off to begin with, such as: Did the home do it, did the school cause it, the psychologist, etc.? But we seldom raise the question just which part of the youngster's personality is involved in his disturbance.

This is exactly what I have been trying to get at. I am attempting to arrive at some categories (conceptually poor, so far) that will suggest what various parts of the personality may be out of whack when delinquent behavior occurs.

I find that most any form of delinquent act can come from a disturbance in any one of several areas of personality. One kid will steal like a real delinquent; another will steal like an infantile neurotic, one who just hasn't grown out of his early kindergarten days. These are not the same children. What good is it to prescribe for the belly-ache that comes from poor food, if the patient has an hysteric stomach problem?

To give a crude outline for what I have in mind, I'll line up seven types. These are not types of delinquents but types of areas within a delinquent that may be disturbed in such a way that delinquent behavior results.

Type 1. Delinquent behavior may be the organism's defense against something that was done to it. Quite a lot of delinquent behavior is as simple as that. If you give a youngester something that is poisonous, he is going to gag. The nuisance value to the community may be as high in this kind of case as in any other, or the results may be as disastrous. But as far as the youngster is concerned, there is nothing wrong with him. It's the way he's handled that's at fault.

Or it may be the child has had some very traumatic experiences. Certain things shouldn't happen to an organism, and you have to expect the organism to react badly if they do. Perfectly healthy people get run over by cars and are maimed. So, too, youngsters who are perfectly healthy psychologically have things happen to them that drive them to destroy property or strike back in some other way.

Type 2. Delinquent behavior may be a result of growth confusion. For instance, a kid may be way behind in development of control, while his sexual machinery may be working overtime. There may not even be severe pathology.

You may say that if you can wait it out, he won't have any trouble. But if that kid has to participate in the full-fledged neighborhood life (where it is expected that a child develops step by step and in tune with his society) he may very well become delinquent even though nothing else is wrong with him.

Type 3. Delinquent behavior may result from the impact of excitement and group intoxication. Every person, and every part of a person, has a melting point, a point of pressure at which control breaks down. You can see it when men go to a convention away from home. They swipe the silver spoons in the Waldorf Astoria, and they do other "antisocial" things. Ordinarily they have good controls. They know that the Waldorf Astoria is a private enterprise and you shouldn't steal from it. But they do it just the same when the excitement gets high enough.

I think there are a number of kinds of intoxication to which kids are highly vulnerable. We never take this seriously enough. We will never be able to understand and deal with vandalism until we can anticipate and appreciate not only what part of a kid's control system will stop functioning but also what will happen to his identifications when he is out at night with a particular group of youngsters who operate under a particular code, and they all goof off and get higher than kites.

Youngsters differ in their melting points under the impact of group psychological intoxication. Some are highly vulnerable; some have low vulnerability. Some have certain characteristics that don't melt away under any circumstances. It depends in part on what stage of development they have achieved at the time. But there are plenty who can easily be intoxicated by excitement, and some of them commit delinquent acts in the process.

Type 4. A fourth area of events within the organism which can produce delinquent behavior is the well-known and much-discussed area of neurotic afflictions, all the way from mild hangovers from childhood difficulties to well-defined neuroses. There are several subtypes here, but I can't take time to describe them in detail.

I must make a distinction, however, between delinquency that is an expression of neurosis and delinquency that is a secondary result of neurosis. Some neuroses are legitimate and others are against the law. An anxiety neurosis is legitimate. But if a kid has a neurosis that involves stealing and starts swiping things, then he is legally delinquent even though not clinically so. Or, again, a neurotic youngster may throw a temper tantrum, and what he does in the temper tantrum may be labeled delinquent. In that case, his aggression is a part of the neurotic affliction.

In contrast, delinquency may be the secondary result of a neurosis, the actions of a youngster who is scared because he has neurotic anxiety. In some neighborhoods you will be beaten up if the others think you are yellow. Under such circumstances a kid with neurotic anxiety has to disguise his fear—act tough or do daring things so that the others won't know he's afraid. And some of these tough or daring or foolish deeds may be delinquencies.

By the way, there are also the schizophrenics, the real screwballs. For the sake of simplification we might as well discuss them right here, even though they do not strictly belong in the same chapter with the neurotics. In their case, the behavior looks like delinquency, but it isn't delinquency, and no good delinquent gang is going to have anything to do with that sort of kid. If the gang is one that just wants to have fun messing around, then they may want some screwball along, because you can set him up to doing something and then, when the police or other adults come along, you can blame all the trouble on him. But if the gang has the vocational ambition of being a real good gang, no schizophrenic can get in, no matter what the psychologists think about his being a delinquent.

Type 5. With this type I get into trouble, not only because it may conflict with some of my previous categories but also because the type itself is not pure. Nevertheless, I want to put here the kind of delinquent behavior that is the result of severe impulse disturbances.

Severe impulse disturbances may be either disturbances in aggressiveness, coupled with explosiveness, or they may be misdevelopments in aim and means of gratification along sexual lines.

In the first of these, it is not aggression alone that marks the youngster's behavior as belonging to this type. Some of the youngsters I am thinking about are usually easy to handle and no problem at all. But they are like an explosive package when they do go off. At that time they are not only aggressive; their aggression is unchallengable, irrational, entirely different from the behavior of the usual hyperactive or hyperaggressive kid you see in the classroom.

Type 6. Into this category I would put disturbances in the control system. By this I mean that the part of the individual which is off beam is the part which is supposed to regulate impulses and urges and keep the individual's perception of other people and their intentions and desires clear. I would think that there are roughly two subdivisions here: Namely, disturbances in the ego part of the control system and disturbances in what is often called the superego.

In the ego part, I include processes by which the individual keeps in touch with outside reality and deals with the concept of the future and the concept of himself, his own past, considering himself a responsible agent, and so forth. Then in another department I put what was originally called the superego. I myself think that instead of "superego" we should use more operational terms. Yet, whatever you call it, there is still a part in which the values sit, even though how this functions to make a good control system we still know little about.

Anyway, sometimes the youngster's disturbance is right there in this superego part. Nothing is wrong with the impulses of such kids.

Some of these youngsters have been subjected to pathological influences up to a certain point; others were not unfortunate in that way, and what went wrong with them is a long story. Some part of their superego disturbance may have come from their association with sub-groups, such as neighborhood gangs, but that, too, is not the whole explanation. Actually, all I can say now is that the control system is out of whack but I still don't have any definite notion why.

Type 7. So far I've left out the genuine delinquent, and I know why. It's because this is the one I don't have to defend as being peculiar or different. This is the youngster whose delinquency is simply a reflection of the ways of life in a delinquent neighborhood. It is so simple that I forget to talk about it and put it on the list.

Basically, this boy or girl has a normal personality, and a normal attitude toward his parents and the community. He rebels somewhat, as all normal youngsters do. But it so happens that the community he belongs to has the wrong value content, from our point of view, and so some of the things he considers fairly proper are called delinquency by the rest of us.

What I have just said is what is usually said about delinquents from slum areas. But I want to add a couple of comments here that you might pick up later.

First, I get into great trouble with this type because I never see such a child. For a long time we have idealized the normal delinquent. And I'm beginning to wonder whether the explantion of these kid's behavior is as simple as we usually think. True there are kids who do not give a damn about conventional ways of behaving because of their identification with a delinquent neighborhood. But these same kids may still have other difficulties, other pathology in them.

The second thing that bothers me, even more, is that I find that this statement (that a delinquent neighborhood offers the children delinquency on a platter) is just not true. Even in neighborhoods where the adults offer the kids delinquent examples to identify with, they don't really want the kids to act the way they themselves do, at least most of the time. A mother may want to be delinquent herself but she doesn't want her child to be. So she washes his mouth out with soap, even though he learned the bad words from her, and even though the moral code is flaunted by almost everybody in the neighborhood.

This kind of situation doesn't produce a simple delinquent. The children in such a neighborhood may be delinquent mainly because they have identified with a delinquent value system. But, in addition, they must have conflicts and other difficulties, just like any other well-identified youngster. In other words, the superego isn't the only thing that is wrong with them.

I would like to study this neighborhood toughy more closely. In many ways I am sure he really is quite different from the other types I have talked about, but just what he is like few of us know. And I would like to get a detailed description of a delinquent neighborhood, and the difference between the adult code and what these adults consider appropriate behavior for children at different age levels.

Miss KOTINSKY: In order to give us a focus, and for a number of other reasons that I think will be apparent to you, I shall ask Dr. Merton to lead off with some comments on the interconnections between Dr. Redl's statement and what he was earlier talking about. After that, I hope we can have comments from Dr. Erikson on these and other matters.

Mr. MERTON: I am not at all sure that I can do anything to relate this storehouse of thinking to anything that has gone before. I need to assimilate, and I am sure I haven't even begun to digest.

With that understood, I would like to try, in a catch-as-catch-can way, to pick up Dr. Redl's remark that he was focusing on the individual—that, in the short time which he had available, he was not dealing with, so to say, the hooks from the individual into the social and cultural context. Actually, I rather doubt that was the case, because there were too many occasions on which, as I was listening to him, I felt a sociological resonance. Let me try to identify these resonances as best I can.

Let's start with the last type first—youths who are involved in a delinquent subculture. We needn't in this company repeat that well-defined norms within the groups carrying this subculture may be mirrored in the larger group, which is not defined as delinquent. The point to be brought out here is that this type seems to me to stand out from all the others. It puts the analytical problem, the problem of the social and psychological analyst, in this wise: How do these sub-cultures come into being? I commented on that yesterday. At the moment, I want to do nothing more than earmark that as a decisive problem.[16] It is a different problem, I think, from how the different types of delinquencies which you have identified come to be.

To begin with type 6, delinquent behavior that derives from disturbances in the control system. Here is one place where I see the possibility of relating what Erik Erikson has said, what Fritz Redl

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[16] Shortly after this conference, there came to hand an extraordinarily percep-tive and systematic analysis of this problem in the book by Albert K. Cohen, Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang. The Free Press, Chicago: 1955. (202 pp.) Cohen tackles the distinctively sociological problem of the emergence of the delinquent subculture and not merely the problem, now become almost traditionalized, of the socialization of youth finding themselves in this subculture. RKM

has said, and what the sociologist is groping toward, because the extent to which the members of a group encounter disturbances in perception of self, of past, of future, of self orientation, of career orientation, and the like would be very heavily affected by the cultural context. This context clearly defines the emphasis assigned the past and the future for an individual in such and such a social category, and in such and such a role.

To what degree are there shared definitions in the range of appropriate emphasis on the development of the control system? This becomes a strategic empirical question, and it involves the concept of *anomie*. A welter of contradictory, rather than consistent and shared, definitions would ensue in one form of *anomie*.

Yesterday we formulated the concept of *anomie* in its social and cultural aspects. Here is another type of *anomie*, a great diversity of cultural norms, or of group definitions, as to what is appropriate.

But *anomie* isn't always a matter of conflicting definitions. It may result from diverse emphases, say, on being rooted, of looking backward to the past, of having a social place in terms of genealogy, in terms of who your parents are, and emphases on being mobile and free to move about, of looking forward to the future, of acquiring your own social place by virtue of what you are, all apart from the status of your parents. This multiplicity of different values to which the individual is exposed—and I want to underscore that they may not be psychologically or logically contradictory or conflicting—represents one part of the cultural environment which would be linked with the probability of disturbances to the control system being more or less frequent, however the effects upon the personality might show up clinically.

This then is one type or component of cultural *anomie*. It is different from the much more conspicuous case in which there are conflicting definitions, of the same role within the same group, and the individual is compelled to identify himself with one group or the other. Here, if you choose one, you are not alienating yourself from the other, for the norms are not in conflict. Where norms are in conflict, living up to the norms of one group means that you are repudiating the norms of another group. So that the cultural map has to be drawn to show the range of norms that can coexist without excessive conflict, and those situations in which orientation toward one set of norms necessarily involves repudiation of others.

This may be most significant in relation to type 6. It may be relevant to certain other kinds of delinquencies, or it may be uniformly relevant to all types. I do not know. But the general point, without linking it up too much with the one type, is that correlative to kinds of delinquency there are **kinds of situational contexts, social and**

cultural, which will make each kind of delinquency more or less likely for a particular personality type. That is the logic of what I think we are talking about. Redl's revisionist program for the concept of the superego obviously comes in here.

I want to comment for a moment on the social mechanism whereby individuals can come to know and to identify with the values of the larger society which are not being continuously expressed by those in the local communities with whom they are in direct contact. Put more simply, how do these kids ever get exposed to the larger values of the total society if these values are not being exemplified in the immediate community in which they live? I hope the conference will take this up. I have no conceptual formulation for which I have any respect.

It may be in point to suggest that we know relatively little about the exposure of delinquents, nondelinquents, and proto-delinquents to those values in the mass media, for instance, which are significantly at odds with the values in the behavioral ways to which they are being directly exposed in their groups. The studies which government agencies are requesting on the contents of comic books by-pass this question. They do not compare the values to which there is mediated and direct behavioral exposure. They do not call for a content analysis of the values to which these kids are being exposed in their face-to-face environment matched against a content analysis of the values of the larger society to which they have been exposed through other avenues. This is an empirical and not wholly a conceptual point. I think it worth our attention because, again, it locates a problem roughly within the context of avenues of exposure to diverse values.

About type 5, severe impulse disturbance, I do not pretend to have anything to say. At the moment, I don't see a sociological context for it, and since this is a wholly improvised review of Dr. Redl's types, it seems preferable to maintain silence where speech would be empty.

Now type 4, neurotic afflictions, and particularly Redl's insightful sociological remarks on the utilization of this type of delinquent by the organized gang, does give me a tie-in, I think. What Redl is saying to us sociologists at that point goes back to the notion of the delinquent subculture and the delinquent society.

We should remind ourselves that, looked at clinically, such delinquent behaviors can be conceptualized as either secondary results of a neurosis or as the acting out of a neurosis. That I find highly suggestive. Approaching that same observation sociologically, it comes out something like this. A person for whom delinquencies are secondary results of neurosis is a person engaged in highly unpredictable acts, whether they are delinquencies or not. And it is the essence of the delinquent gang as of any social organization, that there be controls and that the behavior of its members be predictable.

A good gang member is one who does what he is expected to do, just as is true of a good member of any other society. The executive of the gang wants this to be an effective operation, he doesn't any more want to have trouble than General Motors wants to have trouble in its organization. When Redl says the gang leader knows a screwball when he sees one, I suspect that this could also be conceptualized as saying that the leader "sees" unpredictable behavior as dysfunctional for the group.

This relates to factors bearing on the absorption or nonabsorption of the individual in the group, and it seems to me to have little to do with **anomie.** It throws us back to the question of an organized group: what brings it into being and what enables it to persist? To this question, it gives us a psychological cue: one of the ways it exists is through the process of selecting members. If Redl's hunch is right, those who clearly threaten to disturb a social system will tend not to be admitted to it or will be selectively eliminated from it.

So Redl has now gone beyond the nostalgic conception, developed 20 years ago, of how the normal delinquent group operates. I find his conception fruitful: the neurotic type of delinquent is not functional for an organized delinquent gang and tends to be eliminated by the recruitment or selective processes of the gang. I center on this, not for its intrinsic importance, but because the relationship between the neurotic kind of delinquency and group structure is of an unexpected kind. That is to say, it doesn't have to do with the group structure **producing** the neuroticism but with the compatibility of certain types of delinquencies and the social setting in which they can effectively operate. One gets a picture of the relationship of the functional patterns of the delinquent subculture in the instance of the boy who won't be admitted to the gang, even though he has set fire to the cop's uniform, because he would be a disturbing factor within the group.

Type 3 proposes that whatever other tendencies or traits characterize individuals, they have different "melting points" in different kinds of group atmosphere or its functional equivalent. It seems to me this ought to have great significance for the sociologist in terms that are quite new to me. We are accustomed to thinking about group atmospheres from the sociological standpoint; we have some crude categories for describing them. But we are not accustomed to thinking of these high or low group atmospheres being patterned in such a way that members of different groups or in different statuses are going to be exposed to them with differing frequency.

Exposure to various group atmospheres is also socially patterned. Much has been said about the functions of ceremonial occasions for "release," for "group intoxication," established occasions for "license," "release," "blow-off," and the like. But the patterned variations in

the relative frequency of such occasions in different kinds of groups, which have received little notice, would constitute the sociological corollary to what Redl was saying. It may be in part a function of group defense to increase or decrease the frequency of such occasions, so that the individuals Redl is describing clinically will be exposed to a relatively high degree of group atmospheric pressure more or less often. I find that his remarks, with their clinical emphasis, generate further problems of a sociological kind.

Type 2, the developmental or growth-confusion type, as I see it extemporaneously, links up approximately on the sociological side with type 6, disturbances in the control system. This leads me to wonder if type 6 and type 2 are not closely related clinically, more so, perhaps than any of the other types. Redl points out that there are different rates of growth of potentiality and capacities in different sectors of experience—manipulative, sexual, orientations toward the past and the future, and so on. What would be said sociologically on this developmental or growth confusion, I think, is that there are corresponding variations in the **expectancies of others** about rates of development and controls in different spheres of life. That is, the amount of control emphasized by a particular group in the sex sphere may be slight, and in the political sphere enormous—using the term "political sphere" to mean, broadly, the authoritative control of loyalty to the group. Now the growth of the individual may be well- or ill-matched with the variations of expectation of control in the group.

I do not know if that communicates the point well enough. Whatever the intraindividual, endopsychic trends and developments may be, there is continuously the question about how these **match the requirements of the roles** to which the individuals in the particular group are systematically assigned. These requirements are not fixed by the individual's growth capacities or disproportionate growth tendencies but by forces that are working outside him, so that you may have a certain pressure on the individual to engage in delinquencies not only exerted by his own development but also by this being ill-matched with what is expected of him by the group.

Type 1, if I use what has been included under it as a metaphor, seems to me to give a pretty good summary of some of the components of **anomie.** Let me try the idea on for size, anyway.

The underlying component of that type, as I understand it, is that, by some criterion or other, the organism is within the normal range of variation but is being subjected to demands severely abnormal relative to his capacities. The tongue depressor is pushed down too far and he gags.

Well, the metaphorical equivalent to that is the normal person sociologically considered—that is, with his relationships sufficiently in accord with the expectations of others so that he is not subjected to

severe conflict—but in a situation where excessive demands are being made upon him by the group. Now, that is one of the settings for the emergence of *anomie:* Norms or values are far out of line with the possibility of being lived up to, whether they are success values for the individual or achievement values for the group. The individual who attempts to live up to these norms reacts ultimately by repudiating them, because the effort involves a continuous train of dissatisfaction. That is equivalent to the gag reaction. It is an adjustive response, and it leads to relatively high degrees of *anomie.*

Anomie is not a state of a process but, as we said yesterday, we think of it as being in continued process. It can operate to release energies that lead to repudiation of norms which seem firmly established, so that they are no longer considered binding.

Anomie can also result from insufficiently defined norms, which create a situation in which the individual can't be effectively oriented toward others. He does not know what to expect of them and they do not know what to expect of him because they do not share binding norms. This type of *anomie* is the plight of the alien.

We have all had this experience: If you are enough of an alien in a group, you are experiencing *anomie* of this kind. You are in conflict; you don't know the expected behavior and may at first not know that the behavior you are acting out is of the wrong sort. If you face diverse expectations, differing cultural norms, and it is the same with the other fellow, how can you count on him? When that becomes reciprocated, you have an acute kind of social *anomie.* All this is quite apart from clinical sources. The two conceptions ought to be fed into each other.

One implication of the preceding is a decline in the predictability of the environment, in the predictability of the behavior of others, and this reacts on the individual. It is important to be able to know what the other fellow is going to do, whether or not he is going to be friendly or hostile in response to your behavior. Another implication is relative lack of group support. This support will not be provided by those who live by other standards.

The "pure type" of delinquency, type 7, is worlds removed from anomic situations. The anomic situation produces the subculture in which the pure delinquent develops, I would say. But once that subculture has developed, the situation within it is no longer anomic. The Greeks had a word for it; they called the opposite of the anomic situation the eunomic situation. I would say, hypothetically, that the subculture in which the "pure delinquent" moves seems to be an eunomic group situation which is apparently an adaptation to the previous anomic situation.

Another focus has to do with the structural barriers to awareness of the norms of others with whom one interacts. It isn't that these norms

are necessarily going to be different, but one just does not know what they are. In the language of sociology and social psychology, this has been called pluralistic ignorance This kind of ignorance about the attitudes of others with whom one is significantly involved is, actually, not merely not knowing but, typically, knowing the wrong thing. How pluralistic ignorance typically arises and is maintained and leads to a degree of social isolation in the group is, I think, another problem that might be a candidate for inclusion under the concept of social *anomie.*

My comment is necessarily very sketchy, and it is wholly improvised, as you can see, but it may serve as a basis for further exploration.

Mr. ERIKSON: Fritz Redl's remarks add a most essential general dimension to these discussions. His particular analogies to medicine, he would agree, are valid only up to a certain point. Yet, this quest for a kind of "localization" of the disturbance shows us to be where medical science was at the time of the very first establishment of anatomy and physiology.

Ego identity, of course, is such an "anatomic" concept. It is another part-organ of the ego, delicately interrelated with all the other "organs" of the ego, especially with those to which Fritz Redl referred when he spoke of the superego as having been, for a long time, the only "organ" designated for the internalization of values. Within the framework of the (as yet developing) psychoanalytic ego psychology, then, the term ego identity is supposed to make a little space for things that do not fall under the heading of superego. Very roughly speaking, one would say that the superego is established much earlier, is more absolute in its condemnation and more primitive in its threats, and remains relatively more unchangeable. It, therefore, must be balanced by other, less magic ways of testing social reality and of bridging the internal and the external.

As I said, in defining the relationship of ego and social reality, psychoanalysis is still developing, and it stands to reason that additions of a new "organ" will call for a reappraisal of the already better known ones. I don't want to go into this, because Merton and I must restrain a tendency in ourselves to talk about our fields and to start arguing with colleagues who are not present. But it should be said that research must at all times remain related to theoretical as well as to practical necessities, to the "laboratory" as well as to application.

I may remind you in this context of two things which I pointed out yesterday. First, I have a feeling there is today a theoretical as well as a clinical correspondence between the schizoid personality and the delinquent one, and an important correspondence of both to the identity conflicts of our time—a correspondence which is analogous to what, in Freud's early thought, was the negative correspondence between perversion and neurosis, and their common relationship to the **sexual**

mores of Freud's time. Second, I did not derive the identity concept from a psychoanalytic study of delinquents; I derived the concept largely from the longitudinal observation of healthy children, while the concept of identity diffusion was derived from the psychoanalytic observation of schizoid young people. What I can offer, therefore, are research propositions both for you and for me.

Ego identity is first of all a developmental-historical concept. For that reason I would suggest a systematic consideration of age levels and of "growth curves" as well as of "areas" and "types" of disturbance. True, there are children especially vulnerable to what Redl calls contagion. But we would like to know, at what age all or most children are normally suggestible to certain kinds of contagion; at what age such contagion is most dangerous; and at what age and under what conditions the tendency toward contagion becomes built into a child's character.

Then there are, as I pointed out, certain stages of adolescent development which impel youngsters to make a total choice from among the potential identities offered them. It must be somewhere around the age of 16 that, for any number of reasons, the individual has to make a number of decisions which may prove untenable without "totalization." Everything becomes black or white; inside and outside become sharply defined; and no border traffic is permitted between remaining ambiguities. When this goes on, the individual defends himself ruthlessly against anybody's attempt to make up his mind for him.

On the other hand, there may be a later stage (let us say in the early twenties) when the moratorium has served its purpose, when a modification of identity is still possible, and when society (unless it has "confirmed" the individual as a delinquent) may yet offer attractive alternatives.

Some such developmental considerations, it seems to me, would cut across all the various "types" that can be established by one method or another—and also, of course, across all the various environments that can be defined.[17]

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[17] In an unpublished paper, the sociologist Kai T. Erikson discusses three developmental stages in the professionalization of a criminal career. The stage of *introduction* occurs when the individual first becomes acquainted with delinquent or criminal roles and learns to experiment with their portrayal in childhood games. *Attribution* is the later stage in which the community accepts these experimental portrayals as the roles most characteristic of the individual, the roles in which his attributes are most recognizably represented. This would seem to occur sometime in middle or late adolescence, an age in which society searches for tags by which to identify and place its maturing members. The final stage, *commitment*, takes place when the individual organizes his conception of himself around that central theme and turns to crime as an occupational career.

In the paper which I sent you, ego identity is called "an evolving configuration." It is an evolving configuration of (let me read this) "constitutional givens, idiosyncratic libidinal needs, favored capacities, significant identifications, effective defenses, successful sublimations, consistent roles." I read this formidable list in order to make it clear that all these, and nothing but all these (and possibly more factors), constitute what I call ego identity. So, genetically, the concept includes a great number of things that we haven't been able to touch on at all.

Now we have to return to Fritz Redl's use of medical analogy, which might suggest that we are trying to "localize" and "isolate" disturbances. There are, of course, extreme examples of disturbances which seem to be either all inner accident or all malignant situation. But we know that analysis proves even extremes to be psychological and social at the same time—and always moving along in the relativity of inner and outer events.

Now very briefly I should like to comment on Fritz Redl's "types."

Let me, too, start with that elusive type 7—the "normal" delinquent. About the subcultures, Merton said, "It is very important to know how they came about." Now that seems to me important not only out of sociological-historical considerations, but also for the study of individual genetics.

In one household there may be grandparents, parents, uncles, older children, younger children. Each of these individuals in the household will be internalized in a different way by the child, depending both on the child's stages of development and on the simultaneous life crises of each. Both superego and identity, then, may have a number of contradictory sources. This stands out more clearly in communities such as Pittsburgh, where the earlier history of this country still runs its course. You have more recent immigrants; you have immigrant grandparents who cannot speak English and for whom local radio stations have to broadcast news in their own language; you have whole villages from Czechoslovakia and Poland moved into a city block or blocks, with their own priests, churches, and social clubs. Then you have the shift from larger to smaller family units, and with it a trend away from neighborhood and church. Nobody can remain outside this process; and one can imagine the transformations that children have to witness and internalize in just one childhood.

Now this brings us back to the psychosocial moratorium. Incidentally, it is always revealing to see what new terms will, at a meeting like this, be joked about at meals and in the evenings. Well, the "psychosocial moratorium" received its share. It seems that there are a few erroneous notions, such as that the psychosocial moratorium is consciously chosen by the individual. One word I haven't used since we have been here, and that is "unconscious"; if I had, I would have

had to use it in every sentence. Instead, I assumed that all of us by now accept the fact that important decisions in life are strongly guided by unconscious motivation. Furthermore, the psychosocial moratorium is not characteristic of only certain groups or individuals; one cannot choose to have (or not to have) one. One can only try to make the most of one's individual gifts within the field circumscribed by society and history.

It is always good to keep in mind what a term we coin is supposed to be differentiated from. Most misunderstandings in the humanities arise from the fact that new terms come into use independently of the old terms which they were supposed to counterpoint. Freud has defined a sexual latency, also a kind of moratorium based on a delay of physical sexual development at a time when the first round of psychosexuality is completed. A 15-year-old has completed his growth in many ways as far as mere equipment of mind and body is concerned. But it seems that the human being needs one more delay before he can come of age psychosocially; this delay I called a moratorium. Without finding his identity during that period, the individual cannot make successful use of his sexual and intellectual maturity. He cannot be an effective worker, mate, or parent. The psychosocial moratorium (in some aspects dictated by society; in others, chosen by the individual) postpones the consummation of many acts and associations which the individual could consummate in fact, but not effectively.

I am still on type 7. What Fritz had to say about the delinquent environment was of course tremendously enlightening: that the "normal" delinquent has no more simple an environment than anyone else. How prone we are to idealize what we are not. How easy it is to think that the primitive, or the peasants, or the uneducated have no conflicts because they do not share all of ours. Thus we tend to envy the "normal" delinquent his "simple" conformity to a delinquent world. Obviously, to be a potential type 7 delinquent means to be conforming, but this delinquent has a superego, too; and he, too, must enter some kind of identity and emancipation conflicts as he approaches adolescence.

This brings me to another correction.

Maybe I shouldn't have used the term emancipation yesterday. I did not mean emancipation from parents, but emancipation from childhood identifications which would hinder the process of identity formation. The adolescent has to retain identifications that (roughly) fit together, and he has to give up those which don't. There must be, then, very special problems for children who have delinquent parents when they come to emancipate themselves. For all of them—who go to school, who read, and who, after all, share with all other children some of the public sources of information—must be aware that society has all kinds of standards, even some nondelinquent ones. This pro-

vides any number and combination of potential values; and any number of possible ratios between weak or strong impulsive needs, on the one hand, and simple and complex conformity patterns, superego pressures, and identity elements on the other. It might be that the "delinquent" parents came from moralistic backgrounds, the superego pressures of which they still carry around, even though their values have changed. Their child, although quite contaminated by the mores of the street when vulnerable to contamination, might, at other times, be amenable to the wider values of society and be inclined to give up his conformity to delinquency—if and when sufficient security could be provided for a nondelinquent identity.

Now just a few points about the other types.

About type 6, disturbance in the control system. Here Merton made a point about the cultural defintion of the control system. That involves the definition of what control is. What is considered optimal, normal, minimal control or lack of control or loss of control in any given environment? This has great importance for the identity issue. How a child looks upon his own loss of control depends on the mirror that society holds in front of him at the time. I am sure Fritz Redl would agree that those children who so easily lose control and then take such pains at rationalizing it can deep down be terribly angry with themselves.

Yet, anybody who lives under conditions that he cannot control must sooner or later convince himself that he wanted conditions to be that way, and that he did control them after all. So I would think that such a child's identity formation could be understood in terms of the particular ways in which he tries to make his loss of control a logical part of a paranoid world outlook. This, on occasion, may well fit into the social world around him—if he can learn somehow to use his loss of control in a selective and controlled way. Fritz Redl, of course, has described just this.

Mr. REDL: We now have one case that exemplifies this pattern beautifully.

We first started with plain impulse-flooding as an explanation. After a while we discovered that this boy's temper tantrums were ego phenomena. In the neighborhood where he lives, being a kid who blows easily gives him status and power, so that people leave him alone.

And we took the wrong track in therapy. We tried to make the boy see that he would much rather be adjusted and not have these blow-ups. But for him they were a magical means for finding his social bearings. Being known as "the guy with the temper" gave him the one place in his neighborhood society through which he could achieve a certain stability.

Mr. ERIKSON: Well, type 4, events within the organism, including schizophrenia. Again, what Fritz Redl said was extremely important, and in a way supported the assumption that schizophrenia and certain kinds of delinquency are juxtaposed, like perversion and neurosis. Real perverts don't like true neurotics, either—and vice versa. The fact that gangs exclude schizophrenics and schizoids is only the social reflection of their inner differences. I would think that the schizoids, with their outbreaks of impulse, rather become the lone-wolf criminals and tend to remain lone wolves in gangs.

I have referred to type 3 when I discussed the various intoxications to which young people are exposed. But I would, again, urge the formulation of stages and periods when a child craves for intoxication.

Now about type 2, the "disjointed growth curve." It seems to me important for the whole problem of delinquency to realize that not only do individuals exhibit "disjointed growth curves"; under certain conditions of *anomie* psychosocial development appears to be disjoined for a whole group. For example, in delinquent areas much basic mistrust may be created early in life where there is not enough consistency and *eunomie* to create the kind of trust which stable areas can afford to foster. In these circumstances, children have to learn very early to get along without much trust and, later, to make a common virtue of mistrust. This, however, works only if in the next stage there is an opportunity to live out successfully (i. e., with social approval) a resultant precocious autonomy development, and a successful defense against shame and doubt. You will recognize this combination of bitter mistrust, total self-assurance, and utter lack of conventional shame that forms the characterological base of the delinquent kind of sanity. "The world is no good anyway" becomes an ideology—almost a negative utopia—for a whole group of toughies who make the righteous judge so angry because they imply that people do not differ much and that the judge under certain conditions would surely do exactly as they did.

About type 1, the socially undernourished and traumatized ones, there is nothing to add except that punishment does not put starving people back on their feet, nor does it keep them from stealing ersatz food. The consequence of long starvation is apathy toward anything but food; and the absorption of all striving for identity in one single goal: never to be hungry any more. More punishment takes more "social vitamins" away and thus only increases this apathy. But then, we have not devised methods yet which provide social vitamins even as they punish asociality.

Now I come to point zero: There is nothing that juveniles (of all descriptions) do not know somehow, and cannot say in transparent words, at least at certain times. Somebody should make it a point to

collect original statements from all these types; statements with good descriptions of the circumstances under which they were made—i. e., statements not made in response to questions (or questionnaires) so leading that they invite misleading answers.

Mr. REDL: The only thing I should like still to say is analogous to what Erikson said about his concept of the psychosocial moratorium. I am squeamish because, in an abbreviated stenography, I have made "types." I am afraid that some may think I was trying to talk about types of children. What I am after is varieties of disturbance areas within the organism. In addition, I want to be quite sure that you understand that I do not regard these varieties or types as definitely established. In fact, I don't yet even know what they are for sure, or how they should be arranged.

In private conversation, Peter Neubauer made some very good suggestions about these types, showing me that some are distinctive and others are cross cutting. I am inclined to think that "growth confusion" should be in a different category, and that the whole list really doesn't hang together very well. Actually, the "types" are only an attempt to lead to another level of conceptualization. They are not mutually exclusive. I used them chiefly for illustration.

Mr. ERIKSON: Probably it would be best to look for *all* these disturbance areas in each case, and then to see whether one or two of them are relatively more important and give a different ratio to the whole ensemble. I would rather look for all of them than miss any. One may thus come, by elimination, to emphasize one area exclusively, but this is very different from looking for one only from the start. The aim would not be to try and find people who fit into categories; but to find people in whom all of these things are related to one another in certain configurations.
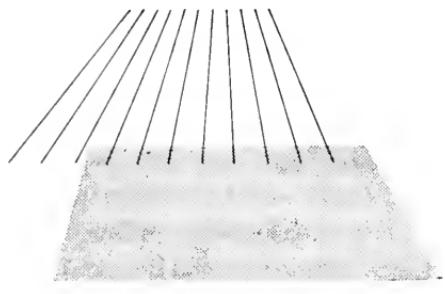
Concluding Comments and an Example of Research

In planning for the final session it was recognized that there was not time for extended discussion of what had been said in the morning. Accordingly, the decision was made to devote part of the time to putting on the record a few points, not necessarily closely related to each other, that one or another conference member wanted to make for future consideration. After this, a description of a study of ideology formation in a delinquent subculture, which Mr. Cloward, one of the panel members, had conducted, would be presented. The hypothesis under consideration in this study was based on theories Mr. Merton had presented to the group. This study therefore seemed a fitting example of research in delinquency with which to close the conference.

Mr. CHEIN: I have some remarks I have wanted to make all along. It seems to me that the general problem is one of the integration of two points of view, one essentially focused on what happens in the general environment of the individual, and the other focused on the individual.

One of the things that we need, then, is a way of looking at the environment that is appropriate to psychological problems, and this is something to which I have devoted a great deal of thought. I have evolved a sort of a checklist of things to look at in the environment, a list flexible enough to permit moving back and forth in certain ways between the environment as it exists objectively and the environment as it exists within the perception of the individual.

These are things that I find worth looking at whenever I want to understand how the environment is conditioning some behavior.[18]

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[18] What follows is a condensation of Chein, I.: "The Environment as a Determinant of Behavior." *Journal of Social Psychology* 39: 115–127. (Feb. 1954.)

First of all, what kind of stimuli—the instigators of behavior, the things that set off some given process—abound in this environment?

Second, what goal objects—the things in terms of which the individual can consummate some need or needs—are available? One would include things like status and position as well as material things among goal objects; there are leadership positions, for instance, which can satisfy individual needs. How many such goal objects are there? Are there many alternative goal objects, or are there only a few? Are there few in relation to the number of individuals who are seeking them, or are there a great many? Basically, the issue concerns the density of goal objects in the environment.

Third, correlative to goal objects, what in the environment represents things the individual needs to avoid? I call these "noxiants" (a barbarism I invented).

Fourth, what behavior supports are there? The environment may, for instance, be well or poorly supplied with "cues" in terms of which the individual can anticipate that, if he were to do so and so, then so and so would follow: "If I were to go through this door, I would find myself in another room, and not on the street." But "miscues" also exist in the environment; that is, things which cause the individual to anticipate that if he goes through a certain door he will find himself in some other room that he wants to get to when this isn't the case at all—if he goes through this door he ends up where he doesn't want to be, possibly in some blind alley. So there are in the environment cues which the individual can utilize to go where he wants to, and miscues which can mislead him. Also, among the behavior supports, there are the means-end paths which the individual can utilize to achieve the particular ends he seeks.

Fifth, correlative to supports are what I call "constraints," the things which inhibit or interfere with a particular behavior, or which make certain behaviors less likely than others. Constraints include, among other things, the absence of supports. If I have no way of achieving a goal, if I have no way of going from where I am to where I want to go, then, obviously, I can't really move. I can, perhaps, aspire, but I can't actually get into motion. There are also other kinds of constraints which might crudely be expressed by the word "punishment": if I were to do something, something would happen to me which I don't want to happen.

Sixth, I look for what I call "directional influences" in the environment—the things that lead individuals to move in certain directions rather than in other directions. This may refer to the selection of goals or to the selection of means, of avenues of access to certain goals.

Among the many kinds of directional influences are the ways in which various stimuli (goal objects, supports, constraints, and so on) exist in time and in space for the individual. By regulating the order of occurrence of these things, one can influence the direction the individual takes. Similarly, there is control over the patterning of the way in which goals and noxiants are made available to the individual, and this also has regulative influence.

This is a considerable over-simplification, but it suggests a kind of a framework for looking systematically at environments with specific reference to psychological problems.

Miss KOTINSKY: This, then, is your own structure to date of the job to which Merton referred: acquiring enough sensitivity to the findings and formulations of other disciplines to be able to make them relevant to yours?

Mr. CHEIN: That's right.

Dr. NEUBAUER: Some of Fritz Redl's outline impressed me deeply. However, it seems to me that if one were to examine the phenomena he described analytically, one would be forced to view them from three aspects: The structural, the genetic, and the dynamic. No one viewpoint alone would ever suffice in describing "types."

What came through to me as Erikson and Merton commented was that each attempted to consider all three aspects. But I think it is important to consider the differentiations and separations of the different disciplines, and I was somewhat disappointed that Erikson seemed to abandon in the discussion his distinctive approach. When there are so many factors, one has to make a choice of how to look at things; some ways of looking at them would seem more profitable than others for some people. One person would look at juvenile delinquency best from the viewpoint of drive; another would best concentrate on its social aspects.

Yesterday Erikson spoke about some levels of the problem which I think are new and belong to the dynamic approach and which seem likely to yield additional answers. I wish Fritz Redl would use them when he goes back to examine the categories of delinquency. One of these was the identity problem, and the other one was the psychosocial moratorium. These can be examined from the standpoint of the ego or the id, and I think that examining them from the standpoint of the superego would also be very useful.

I wish Erikson, even in his last summary, had maintained his position and not abandoned it for a more general frame of reference. Within such a framework a more restricted view would fall into place again. A look at problems of delinquency and problems of behavior and problems of environment from two vantage points might lend

itself best to the selection of data and to the furthering of understanding.

For example, if I were to go back to Fritz Redl's seven types, I should like to ask how each one looks from the point of view of ego identity, say, before becoming involved in all the ramifying factors of our vast frame of reference.

From among all the frames of reference which, I think, came out in reaction to Redl's statement, I think Erikson has provided us with a new and distinctive approach, and I want him to stick to it.

Mr. ERIKSON: I was not aware of taking anything back!

Mr. LANDER: In the large literature on delinquency, there have been two kinds of approaches. Sociologists, by and large, have concerned themselves with the ecologic and demographic distribution of behavior types. On the other hand, psychological research has primarily concerned itself with the study of the individual.

There is another area of research which may provide very fruitful insights for both approaches, and a kind of bridge between them, and that is study, not only of the uniformities or the differentials of behavior, but also of the mosaics of norms and values in different communities.

I do not know of any published study of differential social values in two geographic areas,[19] one with a large concentration of delinquency and the other with very little delinquency. What are the differing life goals and expectations in those two areas? Does the psychosocial moratorium reveal itself differently in those different kinds of neighborhoods? What about people's attitudes toward the police, and toward one another? In other words, getting at the values individually and collectively might prove very fruitful for understanding both collective and individual behavior and might also provide a very useful bridge between the clinical and sociological approaches.

Mr. MERTON: I would like to make a few other comments just to have them on the record, so that I can reflect on them later.

Just as many in the field of psychology express conceptual allegiance to an ancestral father, so many sociologists have their father whom they alternately love and emulate and occasionally, though rarely, repudiate or even try to make over in their own image. Your Freud is our Durkheim, and he has something of relevance to say here; he too has certain root ideas that, like the psychological ones we have been discussing, should be dug up occasionally and reinspected.

In examining the role of social structure in psychosocial phenom-

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[19] There is one in progress under the direction of Dr. Isidor Chein, New York University.

ena, Durkheim's main thesis was that concern should center almost exclusively on the **rates** of those aspects of psychosocial behavior that are under review—not the incidence, the particular cases in which these behaviors occur, but their relative frequency in different parts of the social organization.

The reason for turning to rates as a point of departure in searching out the social components in behavior is that it would be far-fetched to assume that temperament and personality types (to use possibly out-moded terms) would become clustered in certain parts of the social organization unless the social organization somehow operated either to select them or to mold individuals into those types. Consequently, when one thinks provisionally (not ultimately, in static structural terms) about a typology of areas of the social landscape in which certain phenomena occur and finds clusters in one area and not in another, these provide the initial clues as to what is most relevant. In this connection, in the evolution of the three-cornered system to which our discussion has led us, I have noted that both Erikson and Redl have repeatedly implied, and often asserted, that there are areas in which certain clinically observed behaviors are to be expected in relatively high frequency.

Now I am not trying now to break down bridges between the psychological and the sociological. I do think, however, that if you know the shores that have to be bridged, the structure is likely to have firmer support (unless, of course, the base is muddy, with no more substantial foundation for a solid structure than mutual good will).

In this bridge-building game, then, it is important to keep in mind that the work of the sociologist tends to concentrate on observing repetitive behaviors involving large numbers of people. Consequently, he is apt to be less sensitive to the highly individualized, idiosyncratic aspects of what he has observed. Correlatively, the occupational task of most clinicians is to be extremely concerned with the idiosyncratic.

In consequence, by virtue of their occupations and ways of life, each of these two guilds (sociologists and clinicians), which may share the same mode of thought and the same objective, is none the less cumulatively building up its own peculiar kind of sensitivity. The result is a series of lopsided developments. Nevertheless, it is not wise to wait for a scientist of man, his behavior and his works, one who can adequately incorporate these varied sensitivities and, with boundless time and energy, can move on these fronts at once. The tactic that could be most helpful, it seems to me, would be for us to join together and fuse our respective sensitivities from time to time but, in the main, to continue to develop the conceptions most pertinent to each field.

These generalities may have no specific bearing on the particular subject under consideration, but perhaps they should appear on the record.

One last specific remark: on ideologies.

In a sociological accounting, an ideology would have as one of its requirements a sharing of a set of opinions or beliefs—with emphasis on the sharing. One occasionally hears the term "personal ideology." This seems to me an unfortunate usage, simply because it is a contradiction in concepts, though not in terms. Now then, this raises the question of the social conditions that favor the formation of delinquency ideologies. Under what conditions do the personal rationalizations which one or another delinquent develops to help himself deal with his problem become shared, become the ideology of the delinquent group?

This question seems to me to be tied in closely with the matter of whether there is group support for the rationalized behavior. The correlative questions to be raised are not merely whether a delinquent ideology occurs or not, or when it does or does not occur, but what are the social conditions that allow a group ideology to come into being. We are back to what I believe is one of our basic questions: What is the basis for delinquent subcultures? How do they form, and under what conditions?

One aspect of the development of delinquent subcultures is the formation of ideology. This is acceptance by the group of what initially may have been, for one or more individuals, pure rationalization. This rationalization then becomes a way for the group to justify itself to itself or to justify itself to the world outside. How this may happen has been shown in a study conducted by Mr. Cloward, to which I previously referred and which others of you have asked to have described. Mr. Cloward, won't you please tell us about your findings?

Mr. CLOWARD: In order to say a few words about this research, I must first describe the setting in which it was conducted. The setting was a medium-security, barracks-type prison which housed approximately 1,500 prisoners who had been confined for the commission of offenses against military law. Their sentences ranged from 6 months to life, and all had been dishonorably discharged from military service.

Modern prisons have systems of individual incentives which are ordinarily of two types: Those that make prison life somewhat more bearable, such as gradations in custody and privilege, and those that provide for early release, such as time off for good conduct and home parole. In the military prison one of the primary incentives to rehabilitation is an early release procedure called restoration. Through this procedure about six percent of prisoners are returned to active military service.

The most important point about restoration is that it enables the individual to earn an honorable discharge. Men who are restored to active military service and who succesfully complete a tour of duty

receive an honorable discharge rather than the dishonorable discharge to which they were originally sentenced by court-martial. Except for infrequent cases of administrative amnesty, restoration affords the only means by which one can earn an honorable discharge. It is, therefore, the highest reward conferred upon conforming prisoners. Those who do not apply for restoration or who are not selected for it in spite of applying may very well be rewarded for good behavior in confinement by release on home parole, but that final release nonetheless carries with it the stigma of dishonor. Accordingly, restoration to active military service is sought by approximately 70 percent of newly admitted prisoners.

As it turns out, however, restoration is not sought by men who have been in confinement for any length of time. This discrepancy between the levels of aspiration of newcomers and of old-timers was the strategic sociological datum which led to the prosecution of this research, for the question arises as to what it is in the social structure of the prison which leads one prisoner after another to abandon interest in achieving higher status.

In order to study the processes through which the aspirations of individuals deteriorated and were ultimately abandoned, a panel study was designed. One hundred prisoners were interviewed individually within 72 hours following their arrival at the institution; thereafter, each was reinterviewed 4 times, at intervals of 6 weeks, making 500 interviews in all. During this cumulative period of 6 months, the prisoner was required to attend various formal orientation lectures conducted by members of the custodial staff, transferred from isolation quarters to a permanent inmate company, assigned to employment, processed by diverse offices within the penal hierarchy, and subjected to "board action" for restoration, parole, and clemency. In substance, the more significant events in the life of the prisoner take place during the months immediately following admission to confinement. Thus, repeated observations of the same individuals throughout this period provided a basis for tracing changes in attitudes and behavior among those who were being progressively assimilated into this social system.

Now let me tell you more about this goal, restoration to active military service, and the prescribed means by which it is to be achieved.

During the formal orientation lectures which follow admission, prisoners are enjoined above all else to seek renewed membership in the Armed Forces, for to hold such aspirations presumably symbolizes a state both of atonement and of readiness to serve one's country honorably (which, in this social system, is equivalent to saying that the individual is rehabilitated). It is not enough that the individual should respond appropriately to psychological counseling, to religious guidance, to occupational or educational training. "The courageous

performance of men's highest duty—to serve honorably both God and Country" is the ideal held up to every prisoner, and aspiring to be restored is the means by which one strives to attain this lofty goal.

If appeals to patriotic motives and the like fail to inspire widespread interest in restoration, then the deprivations imposed by return to civil life with a dishonorable discharge are emphasized. About this, one prisoner said, "Yeah, they told us about that this morning. They said a DD isn't too good in civilian life if you got a family and want a job. It makes me wonder . . . having my boy grow up knowing his old man got a DD."

The idea of returning to active military duty is also stressed in many situations apart from the orientation sessions. At the institution where this research was conducted, for example, the monthly prison magazine was entitled *The Restorator.* When nonaspirants (identified as such because they fail to apply for resforation) appear before the clemency board, they are routinely questioned about their lack of interest in military service; not infrequently, the prisoner is encouraged to change his mind, although it is recognized by board members that a positive recommendation for restoration would be inappropriate. But one should aspire whether it is appropriate or not. Official behavior of this kind conveys the distinct impression that restoration rather than home parole or clemency is the "highest" goal.

Once the wisdom of maintaining an exemplary confinement record has been stressed, the authorities describe the techniques by which men can avoid disciplinary infractions. To judge from what most men told us, the prisoners are cautioned to avoid interpersonal relationships at all costs. To become involved with other prisoners will surely lead to unfortunate consequences. As the colonel was reputed to have said: "You'll get nothing from the other men but trouble." In other words, "keeping out of trouble" is defined primarily as "keeping away from the other men." Formal rewards (restoration, parole, or whatever) are awarded to those who "do their own time"—which is to say, to those who assiduously abstain from participating in peer group activities.

This definition of conformist behavior, which enjoins above all else avoidance of interpersonal relationships, has emerged because informal groupings among prisoners are viewed with abiding fear by custodial personnel. The custodian is ever haunted by the spectre of riot, revolt or mutiny; informal groups are thought to be the combustible materials out of which such conflagrations spontaneously arise. Furthermore, it is a commonplace in penal life that the bulk of illegal behavior—such as smuggling contraband—is carried on by groups. Penal philosophy being what it is, the authorities feel that in order to manage deviant behavior they must either induce high rates

of voluntary isolation among prisoners, or short of this, engage in frontal assaults upon groups in order to suppress them. What needs to be understood, in other words, is that "good behavior" is defined as the scrupulous avoidance of peer activities together with strict adherence to custodial rules. Formal rewards are, for the most part, accessible to a few who engage in self-imposed isolation and are inaccessible to all who are identified as members of deviant groups.

Now what did the men who were interviewed have to say about these rules and admonitions? And why did they react as they did?

First, following the formal orientation, the men had no doubt about the means prescribed for attaining restoration. One after another indicated that maintaining a good record in confinement was the most important single prerequisite. In fact, many perceived that "keeping out of trouble" was the only prerequisite. As one man put it, "The colonel said that it don't matter what you did to get in prison. What matters is how you behave yourself. If you keep a good record and don't get in trouble, you can get back to duty."

Although this man's statement represents a gross exaggeration of the actual possibilities for restoration, the fact is that a man's adjustment in confinement does have a direct bearing on his chances: A good record by no means insures passage to higher status but a poor adjustment almost entirely precludes it. A review of the records of men previously restored to duty amply confirmed this point. During the 2 years following onset of war in Korea, 250 prisoners were restored: of these, only 6 had committed disciplinary infractions while in confinement. Hence, prisoners who are apprehended for disciplinary infractions of any kind cannot expect to be restored.

Second, after these formal orientation lectures the men had extraordinarily optimistic hopes of achieving restoration. It was also evident that they had no knowledge of the fact that the actual rate of restoration was only 6 percent.

This latter fact, however, did not in itself explain their exaggerated expectations of returning to the army. Further analysis of the interview materials suggests that the source of these false hopes is to be found in the relationship of two phenomena: The need-disposition among prisoners to believe that early release is both possible and imminent, and the open-class ideology communicated by the authorities during the orientation lectures.

Imprisonment generates phantasy. The trauma of being apprehended, tried, convicted, and incarcerated—with all this means for one's self-image—is a sufficient source of ego-deprivation to stimulate considerable wishful thinking. Indications of this process were everywhere evident, especially in unfounded rumors of "Christmas clemency," "presidential amnesties," and other forms of mass release

from confinement. Return to the outside world is always a source of deepest concern.

What must be explained in greater detail, however, is the matter of ideological themes communicated during the formal orientation. To judge from the comments of most respondents, the authorities insisted that there was a high, positive correlation between effort and reward, between conformity and mobility, between ambition and success. Everyone was said to have "an equal chance," and, what is more, everyone was said to have "a 50–50 chance." As one prisoner remarked: "The colonel said our chances was 50–50. He told us all you got to do is stay out of trouble. I think I have a good chance to go back if I don't mess up, and right now I don't intend to mess up." Some months later, having been rejected for restoration, this same respondent reported in words edged with bitterness: "What they really mean when they say everyone has a 50–50 chance is that you either get it or you don't—and most people don't. But they don't tell you that last part."

In short, the authorities stressed the idea that active striving for restoration, together with strict compliance with the prison regime, would surely result in passage to higher status. And, as might be expected, individuals who accorded legitimacy to that assertion tended to exaggerate the chances for restoration. Hence it seems that the prisoners—ready to seize on any hope, however remote, which held out the possibility of early release—were more than favorably disposed to believe that just about anybody that works for it gets it. In effect, the men needed to believe precisely what the authorities encouraged them to believe.

Furthermore, new prisoners were told that antecedent factors, such as academic achievement, criminal history, or military adjustment, do not in any fashion constitute a bar to further military service. On the contrary, restoration is something to be *achieved;* a man's worth will be tested against his adjustment in confinement rather than against his past record. Since every man is equally able to abide by custodial rules if so motivated, each shares the same chance of being restored.

One prisoner reported on this as follows: "Some officer was telling us about that this morning. He said it's like in the Constitution. 'All men are created equal.' Well, here he said, 'All men are confined equal.' " This prisoner was not an exception. In fact, in response to the question, "Do you think all prisoners have the same or different chances of being restored?" 87 percent of the respondents said they felt that "the chances are the same." It is not so much what a man had been in the past but what he makes of himself in the future (i. e., in confinement) that counts. In other words, everyone should apply for restoration since the goal is accessible to all.

Although equality of opportunity was extolled by the officials as the prime virtue of the restoration program, there was little evidence of this philosophy in day-by-day institutional practices. In one case after another, restoration decisions were apparently formed largely on the grounds of the prisoner's past history; although a good adjustment in confinement was a necessary condition for restoration, it was by no means a sufficient one. For example, it made considerable difference whether one had committed a distinctively military offense, such as desertion, or an offense with an equivalent in civil law, such as larceny or assault. Although half of the prisoners in this setting were confined for desertion or for being AWOL, the proportion of men with such offenses who had been restored during the 2 years immediately following the Korean War was only 25 percent. In other words, crimes against persons or property were consistently over-represented among men restored to active military service. Similarly, differences with respect to a wide range of variables, including education, socio-economic status, and ethnic affiliation, were found.

It may very well be that the selection of men for restoration ought to be governed by preconfinement considerations, but that is not at all the issue in question here. The prisoners were led to believe that restoration was within reach quite apart from the nature of their prior social adjustment, and thus many men who had no chance whatsoever of success were led to hold high aspirations.

This is the same sort of situation that Professor Merton has described as being characteristic of American society: There is an open-class ideology but success is infrequently attained—and then with difficulty—by individuals who have little formal education and few economic resources.[20] Similarly, in the military penal system, men who had committed distinctively military offenses, or who had committed more than one offense, or who had little education had little probability of being restored despite their aspirations.

When the notion of "equality of opportunity" prevails in a situation that is marked by differentials in access to a success-goal, strains are likely to result. As time passed, many respondents became sensitized to veiled policies which operated to restrict access to higher status for certain categories of men, but especially for those whose offenses represented a repudiation of military mores. As one man said, "It seems like if you went AWOL, it's worse than if you committed robbery or stole something from someone. It seems the worse your crime is, the better chance you got of restoring. You take a $1,000 from the army and they let you restore. But deserters (he shook his head sadly) . . . no soap. How many times do they want you to pay for a crime?" As will become evident at later points in this analysis, the men who

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[20] Merton, Robert K. *op. cit.* p. 136.

were subjected to differential strains of this kind were more likely than otherwise to engage in deviant behavior.

How this change came about was something like this. When new prisoners finally complete the processing cycle (approximately 2 weeks) and are transferred to permanent companies, they are in a strategic position to elicit information from the more "prison-wise" among their associates. The themes characteristic of this informal orientation deal with the manipulation of administrative and professional personnel, how to evade rules, which rules must be obeyed consistently, which rules can be broken in particular places and at given times, and the like. Perhaps of even greater importance to the new arrival is the availability of information on restoration: In essence, very few are restored, and those who are restored rarely deserve it, while many who deserve it are made "to pull all their time." Generally, the point is stressed that the system has no legitimacy at all—that "the army" never makes good on its promises.

In this manner, the individual becomes acquainted with the prevailing ways and values of the informal community. As this socializing experience proceeds, the conflicts engendered thereby manifest themselves in statements to the effect that while "the colonel" said one thing, "the guys" took quite a different position on the matter. "There's quite a few gets restored," one man said to me. "At least that's what the colonel told us. But I don't know how true it is. Most of the guys say they're sending most of them home after they pull their time and aren't restoring any at all."

The general effect of the informal orientation was to call into question the validity of the official ideology; one man after another began to wonder if there was not, in fact, a gross discrepancy between the actual chances for restoration and the possibilities for it alluded to by the authorities. Gradually, the primary climate of opinion took precedence over the secondary environment. As the weeks passed, many of the men who were interviewed no longer behaved like detached observers reporting upon "a difference of opinion" between "the colonel" and "the guys"—the point of view of the latter group became more or less incorporated as their own.

What becomes important here is the fact that pressures from various sources overwhelmingly acted to modify attitudes and behavior even among those who were most inclined to identify with the formal ideology. In addition to a constant, nagging exposure to the coercive ethos of the informal social organization, there was the realistic matter of the actual mobility rate. It was difficult indeed for a conforming prisoner to rationalize his defense of the formal ideology once he became acquainted in his own experience with the restoration rate. Hence many tended to abandon interest in restoration. In fact, be-

tween the first and final panel interviews—a period of 6 months—25 percent of the respondents shifted from "yes" to "no."

These men were exceedingly embittered. "I wouldn't take restoration for anything," one said. "The only reason they give anything to anybody is not because they deserve it but just because they want to impress the public and make it seem like everybody in here has got an equal chance like." Although one detects in this remark an element of sour grapes, the fact is that this respondent did not apply for restoration when the opportunity afforded itself. Hence, with the passage of time, one prisoner after another responded to the discrepancy between the open-class ideology and the negligible opportunities for upward mobility by abandoning interest in the success-goal altogether.

Having changed their ideas about restoration in this way, did the men exhibit corresponding changes in other behavior? The situation in the prison, you see, was in some ways like the one Professor Merton describes theoretically as making for deviant behavior. As noted earlier, prisoners occupy a position in the military system from which access to higher status is relatively limited; at the same time, they are uniformly encouraged to seek higher status despite structural barriers to upward mobility. The research which I am reporting is in this sense a case study of the processes by which initially conformist behavior, once subjected to profound structural pressures, is progressively converted into nonconformist behavior. All of this is exemplified first by deterioration in levels of aspiration, and thereafter by participation in various kinds of deviant role behavior.

In the course of this study, three role adaptations were observed: conformity, ritualism, and passive noncooperation.

Conformity: For some individuals (at the close of the research, about 40 percent), restoration was the only acceptable goal. To the extent that the system makes this goal attainable, it must be sought. Constant references to matters of individual conscience and status in kinship and community groups suggest that these were individuals who felt relatively more deprived by imprisonment and dishonorable discharge than their peers. Despite the fact that these individuals uniformly perceived that opportunities for achieving higher status were negligible, they nevertheless persisted in their aspirations. They were, in effect, betting against the odds in the (usually forlorn) hope of getting a lucky break. Their adaptation was characterized by abject passivity, strict adherence to the rules, and relative isolation from their peers.

Ritualism: This category of adaptation (30 percent) is remarkably akin to conformity, with the difference that the ritualist adopts a "hopeless" attitude towards restoration and declines to strive for it. He is particularly responsive to the competitive aspects of achieving

higher status, and he remarks, among other things, "I can't stand to be hurt." He eschews participation in recreational activities and the like on the grounds that these might well plunge him into unexpected difficulties which would otherwise disrupt his routinized way of life and involve him with the authorities. His weary comments that he is "just putting in time" and "counting the days till I get out" are marked by emotional qualities often characteristic of depression.

Passive Noncooperation: To a greater or less extent, all prisoners manifest anxiety about their life situation. During the first months in confinement, for example, most of the respondents said they worried about the consequences of dishonorable discharge. But for about 30 percent of the men, overt expressions of concern were progressively modified. These prisoners who eventually adopted passive noncooperation as their primary role adjustment passed through an intermediate socializing stage in which these anxieties were masked by a facade of contempt and disdain for culturally sanctioned values.

This sour-grapes attitude was everywhere evident, as in frequent comments to the effect that "I'd rather have a DD than HD *anyhow!*" What is more, under these conditions of social structure, the prisoner is expected to express hostility toward the army. As one respondent said, "It's the style to hate the army, and it's the style to want a DD." Thus prisoners agreed among themselves that "the best damn soldiers are in jail" and "we'd rather spend 10 years in hell than go back to the army for 6 months."

Of course, many respondents privately expressed skepticism about the standardized bravado which characterized informal relationships. As one man said, "I hear them say, 'I wouldn't take restoration; I wouldn't go back no matter what they did.' But that's a lot of bull. They just say that to act big and make people think they're tough. They don't mean it. They'll take anything to get out of here, but they don't think they have a chance, so they act like they don't want anything." But whether most prisoners genuinely subscribed to this sour-grapes pattern is of little importance; the fact is that it both persisted and was engaged in by a goodly number of them irrespective of their personal feelings. And the point is that extensive exposure to and participation in this sour-grapes pattern is but a prelude to the emergence of a more concrete and observable kind of behavior which I categorized as passive noncooperation.

Participation in the sour-grapes pattern constitutes a socializing process by which disgruntled individuals are recruited and organized into deviant groups. It is engagement in these more highly structured activities which distinguishes passive noncooperation from simple expressions of hostility and anger. As a role adaptation, passive noncooperation involves deliberate and organized behavior rather than random verbalizations of anti-army sentiments. In other words,

the sour-grapes pattern is superseded by the goal of "beating the system" through organized, disciplined *evasion* of institutional rules.

Men who engage in passive noncooperation (about 30 percent in my study) are not (or are no longer) interested in abiding by the rules; they have little hope for early release in any form. When the individual ceases to ascribe legitimacy to the rules, he is saying, as one respondent did, "I don't want nothing from this prison." Ostensibly, he seeks none of the rewards offered by the system and, because of this, he is willing to violate the rules short of "getting more time." As prisoners sometimes remarked, "I'm going to mess up and do everything I can to have a good time and aggravate these guards, but not enough to get another trial." Thus the individual develops a readiness to participate in illegal activities: gambling, distributing pornographic literature, smuggling contraband, committing acts of larceny, and the like.

The norms of deviant informal groups diverge considerably from formal norms. But this is not to say that informal groups fail to perform the latent social function of reinforcing official sanctions with respect to the more dramatic forms of illegal behavior, for quite the reverse is true. As a matter of fact, informal norms constrain individuals from engaging in "direct action," and it is precisely this characteristic of the role adaptation which distinguishes passive noncooperation from rebellion. Deviant behavior in this social system was, above all else, oriented towards circumventing the rules while leaving them intact; to engage in violence—or whatever—is only to enrage the authorities and to risk the possibility of more stringent and coercive custodial practices. Obviously anything which heightens surveillance only threatens all the more to disrupt established informal ways of evading the rules. Hence the acquisition of passive noncooperation as a role adaptation involves learning to "play it cool" rather than to indulge in self-defeating violations of the rules certain to invoke reprisals from the officials.

One last point about passive noncooperation needs to be made: Namely, the relative integration in groups of those who adopt this role behavior. Once formal rewards have been repudiated and substitute goals sought, cooperative behavior becomes crucial. Joint activity is rationalized by the shared sentiment that nothing is to be gained by adherence to the rules, while much that is immediately gratifying is to be gained by conforming to informal norms. If for no other reason, the stress upon cooperative enterprise comes into being because the goals sought require more or less organized effort—which is to say, a division of labor. Through the elaborate network of informal relationships, information of vital interest is received and transmitted, material goods otherwise denied are possessed, and vehicles for the satisfaction of many other needs are ingeniously but nevertheless con-

trived. In other words, almost every kind of activity which contravenes the rules necessarily involves cooperative activity.

The reverse is true for those men who seek restoration: They are systematically constrained to avoid interpersonal relationships on the ground that these might jeopardize their chances for success. This contrast suggests, then, that it is the structure of the institution which determines the conditions under which belonging to groups is functional or dysfunctional.

Finally, what does this situation do to the relatively conforming prisoner? Obviously he is caught in a dilemma. If he fails to meet informal role-obligations, his behavior is interpreted by other prisoners as defection from their norms; on the other hand, if he adheres to the norms of his peers he is ultimately regarded by the authorities as one who deviates from the officially sanctioned role adjustment. This discrepancy is all the more important because his peers as well as the authorities are in strategic positions to invoke sanctions for nonconformity (viewed from either point of view). The authorities may deny restoration to the individual who fails to conform; if that nonconformity also happens to include participation in illegal activities, the authorities are further empowered to punish the individual by placing him in isolation quarters or the like. Similarly, the prisoners may deny the advantages of membership in peer groups to those who defect from their norms; what is more, the prisoners may (and often do) seek reprisals of one kind or another against those who spurn the informally prescribed role adjustment—physical violence, ridicule, alienation, and similar manifestations of hostility being the consequence. Thus in the nature of the total system there are conflicting pressures which sharply constrain individuals to behave in ways which are anything but congruent with their underlying feelings. Here indeed is a reference group conflict of such proportions that it cannot be ignored.

Through the medium of the panel interviews, I found that **with rare exception, aspirants respond to this situation of conflict by more or less concealing their interest in restoration.** This is illustrated by the following excerpt from an interview. "Do the guys in D Company talk about restoration among themselves?" I asked. "No . . . not much." "Well, what did they say when you told them you had decided to apply for restoration?" "Oh, nothing. Nobody knows about it." "How come? Are you keeping it a secret?" "No, it's just none of their business." "Well, what would they say if they found out?" "Nothing. I just don't talk to them about it."

Because aspirants are fearful of revealing their real feelings about restoration, they rarely attempt to counter the anti-army propaganda disseminated by nonaspirants. For the most part, aspirants remain passive and silent. To discuss restoration is to risk the possibility of

social alienation or physical violence, and, to make it worse, disturbances of this kind not infrequently result in official disciplinary action. Accordingly, it is best to say nothing. From another point of view, the aspirant has little incentive to persuade others of the rightness of his opinions. Why should it matter whether or not others want restoration or succeed in achieving it? After all, the chief concern of the aspirant is whether he achieves it. In fact, if few men are motivated to apply for restoration, his chances might even be improved. Hence, to conceal one's true sentiments represents the most effective means by which to minimize conflict; accordingly, this was the modal response among those who aspired to be restored.

When aggregates of men systematically conceal or deny their real feelings, a condition of pluralistic ignorance comes into being. Because conforming prisoners feel constrained to pay lip-service to deviant norms, their visibility as conformists is obscured. The consequence of this is the fact that each conformist ultimately comes to believe that he is the only one who holds sentiments which support socially acceptable values. In other words, it is this condition of ignorance of the attitudes of others which, above all else, explains the fact in prison life (perhaps in many other situations) that small numbers of relatively cohesive deviant groups successfully control the larger aggregate of individuals. Similarly, it is this condition which accounts for the widespread and unopposed operation of a nonconformist ideology when the bulk of prisoners privately dissent from it

Mr. MERTON: Cloward's study is a substantial contribution to determining how these so-called delinquency subcultures develop. It also raises some interesting questions about personality types. For instance, the autonomous adaptation type, the kind of man who can maintain ideas that are not permitted by his peers although he does not express them openly. I suspect this is a type not confined to military prisons.

Cloward's research tells an important though advisedly incomplete story. It just begs for supplementation by our colleagues, the psychological clinicians.

Mr. GOULD: I want to express my admiration for Mr. Cloward's presentation, for the job he did in that study, and I would like to propose a similar study in a training school—a study in which you would take 100 first admissions and follow them, but supplement sociopsychological study with clinical study.

Mr. KOBRIN: In planning programs of research in delinquency, we do not have limitless power of control. There are certain things which can be done (that is, which might be acceptable to the public and to the officials who are responsible for responding to acts of aggression and destruction), and there are other things which simply cannot be

done. Some effort ought to be made to define what the areas of potential control really are.

One direction suggested in our discussions here has been that we ought to explore more fully the basic problems of human nature, and personality, and social life, and so on. Another direction would be determined, it seems to me, by what we perceive as the realistic opportunities for intervening in the lives of individuals or in the social structure of communities.

What are the possibilities here? For example, setting up clinics in all delinquency areas is a widely proposed idea. Has anybody examined what these agencies might do, what they might become in the course of their institutional adaptation in such situations? I do not know.

What happens when you start with such a proposal as going into a community and seeking to reorganize it from within? Certain things happen to the organization that you set up. Purposes get shaped and bent by the structural situation within which they are played out. And so on.

In summary, I want to say that in searching for some criteria of where to look for useful studies or useful perspectives for studies, I think that one has to begin with the prospects and potentialities for successful intervention and control either in the social process or in the psychological process.

Perhaps this question should have been raised earlier. Perhaps it is irrelevant. But I feel sure that some such accounting has to be made at some point.

Mr. MERTON: In closing—as our chairman reminds us we must do— I want to echo the comments of those who have spoken before and to emphasize the tentative and provisional quality of what has been going on here for the past two days. Such comment should not be understood as defensive or as merely polite. I for one am persuaded of the value of a situation of intellectual amorphousness and growth, in which efforts are sustained though groping. But since the pressures of our world are such that premature commitments are wanted in all manner and all types of things, it is wise to underscore the fact that our efforts have been groping and tentative—and very exciting.